PROVINCIAL RESPONSE

to the
Resolutions of the 2011
Union of British Columbia Municipalities
Convention

BRITISH
COLUMBIA
The Best Place on Earth

Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development
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A1 RCMP INTEGRATED TEAMS

WHEREAS the RCMP Lower Mainland Integrated Teams were established without consultation with the municipalities that they are to serve;

AND WHEREAS the integrated teams have been formed to serve the Lower Mainland rather than individual municipalities:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that local governments are not required to financially support any integrated police teams established in the province.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

The services provided by the regionally integrated teams are services that municipalities are responsible for providing as part of their municipal police service. The RCMP is responsible for the operational aspects of policing and they have determined that the most effective way to provide these specialized services is by regionally integrated teams.

Integration helps communities stretch their policing dollars further, by giving every police force access to sophisticated equipment and expert police resources. The BC Association of Chiefs of Police supports integration and, in the Lower Mainland, the RCMP Mayors Consultative Forum all supported integration. With the Forum's support, a single, integrated homicide investigations team (IHIT) was established for the Lower Mainland in May 2003, making sophisticated investigative tools available to every community in the region, and enhancing police ability to track complex cases across municipal boundaries. Based on the success of IHIT, further integration was approved, coordinating shift schedules to enable 24/7 coverage around the Lower Mainland District.

Government is working closely with municipalities and police to ensure police resources are used effectively and efficiently.

A2 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS – ONLINE VOTING

WHEREAS *Local Government Act* Division 9 – Voting Opportunities does not allow the ability to offer online voting to electors in local government elections;

AND WHEREAS this additional service provision would assist the general population especially the elderly, disabled, snowbirds, and those working in camp, to participate in the democratic process:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the Province of BC to initiate the policy analysis and legislative changes required to implement online voting for the 2014 local government election.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development

The Province is supportive of the concept of online voting and finding ways to make it work in the local government elections system. That means ensuring that it would work in a way that enables all involved in the local elections process to feel confident in the security, transparency, and integrity of the voting process and the validity of the election outcome.

Current legislation does not provide authority to local governments to provide online voting opportunities.

The Province wants to work with UBCM and specific local governments that are interested in implementing online voting to see if online voting can be developed in a way that addresses concerns with this process and provides appropriate safeguards to allow for voter confidence.

Elections BC reviewed the opportunities and risks of online voting and published a discussion paper on this topic. That work will be helpful in guiding decisions about the potential development of online voting for local elections.

A3 BC FERRIES RATE INCREASES

WHEREAS BC Ferries announced in early 2011 that ferry rates would increase 100% in four years on all northern routes;

AND WHEREAS the ferry route to Haida Gwaii is an extension of Highway 16 and an essential service for its residents for both personal and freight transportation:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM lobby the provincial government to recognize our coastal ferry services as essential extensions of our provincial public highway system and provide the independent BC Ferry Commission with a mandate to provide comprehensive recommendations aimed at creating equity between our terrestrial and marine highways and keeping jobs in northern BC;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that UBCM lobby the provincial government to ensure that the BC Ferry fares and cores service levels are frozen at current levels until such time as the provincial government implements legislation that recognizes our coastal ferry services as essential extensions of our provincial public highway system and creates equity between BC's terrestrial and marine highway systems.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

The Province recognizes that the coastal ferry system is an integral part of the provincial transportation network and families living in coastal communities need access to reliable and affordable ferry service. Since 2001, the Province has contributed over $1 billion to support coastal ferry services.

Last year, the new BC Ferry Commissioner, Gordon Macatee, requested that the Province provide him with the mandate to review the current model. In response, the Legislature passed *Costal Ferry Amendment Act (CFAA)* in June 2011 giving the Ferry Commissioner the mandate, time and resources to review the Coastal Ferry Act in order to recommend changes that would better balance the interests of ferry users with the financial sustainability of the ferry operator. While the review is underway, *CFAA* limited the Price Cap increase to 4.15% for all routes in 2012/13.

As part of the review, the Commissioner is conducting an extensive consultation process with coastal communities to ensure that their experiences, perspectives and suggestions are reflected in the report. The Commission's recommendations were released on January 24, 2012. The Province is reviewing these recommendations, and will be be making decisions without undue delay.

The Province is reviewing the Commissioner's report and recommendations in January 2012. these recommendations, and will be will be making decisions without undue delay.

A4 ENHANCED SENIORS' CARE OUTREACH & PREVENTATIVE HEALTH PROGRAMS

WHEREAS a significant capacity for maintaining the health and well-being of seniors exists at the municipal level through neighbourhood houses, senior's centres and community centres;

AND WHEREAS limited funding for these services means they cannot meet the need for outreach programming to isolated seniors, information services on locally available social and health programs for seniors, social programming to keep seniors active and connected:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government provide funding for enhanced seniors' outreach and preventative health programs (including information services, social networking, and age-appropriate exercise programs) and to support better coordination among existing services.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

The Province is supporting a variety of programs and initiatives in communities across the province aimed at enhancing outreach to seniors and strengthening the ability of older British Columbians to remain healthy, active and connected in their communities. For example, Healthy Families BC, the new comprehensive health promotion program announced by Premier Christy Clark, will help families, including seniors, make healthy choices and lead healthier lives.

The Ministry of Health (MoH) continues to collaborate with UBCM and other partners to encourage and support local governments to take action to make their communities more welcoming and accessible to people of all ages through its Age-friendly BC Initiative. As part of this initiative, MoH is developing new age-friendly tools and resources. For example, MoH released a new guide to help businesses attract and keep older customers and employees called "Creating an Age-friendly Business in B.C". This and other resources are available both in print and on the Province's information website SeniorsBC.ca.

The SeniorsBC.ca website and e-newsletter were launched by the Province in March 2010 to provide seniors and their families with a one-stop, user-friendly information source on services and supports for seniors and other topics of interest to older British Columbians. The website includes tips and information on how to keep healthy and active, and links to a range of resources such as the "Healthy Eating for Seniors" handbook, and the "Move for Life" DVD. Seniors can also access information over the phone through the toll-free Health and Seniors Information Line, with translation services available in 130 languages.

To improve the way the Province communicates with seniors, MoH held a series of focus groups with seniors in several communities around the province to get feedback on the best ways to support older British Columbians with information and resources. Findings from these focus groups will be incorporated into new and existing communications initiatives.

At the same time, the Province is working with communities to explore new and innovative ways of reaching out to seniors and supporting seniors' independence and community participation. For example, MoH has partnered with the United Way of the Lower Mainland on a community-based pilot initiative called Community Action for Seniors' Independence (CASI). Through CASI, local agencies in five pilot communities have received funding to provide a range of non-medical home support services such as housekeeping, transportation and yard work to help seniors remain living in their own homes. As well, the Province is continuing to support seniors' independence by investing in affordable seniors' housing through BC Housing.

Finally, construction has commenced on 18 Seniors' Community Parks, which provide outdoor recreation equipment to improve mobility, coordination and balance for older adults — and also provide a place for seniors to socialize.

A5 RETENTION OF CARBON OFFSETS BY LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

WHEREAS, beginning in 2012, local governments in British Columbia will be required to purchase carbon offsets in order to achieve carbon neutrality;

AND WHEREAS local governments lack funding to achieve carbon neutrality through improvements to local infrastructure:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM lobby the Province of British Columbia to allow each local government to retain its own carbon offset monies, with the requirement that the monies be placed in a reserve fund for future local carbon-reduction initiatives.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment - Climate Action Secretariat (CAS)

Local governments should be aware that the first step in achieving carbon neutrality is measurement of an annual corporate GHG inventory, followed by reducing, offsetting/balancing, and reporting.

A climate action reserve fund is a creative way of budgeting for emission reduction projects and demonstrates progress towards carbon neutrality; however a reserve fund will not (of itself) mean a local government has achieved carbon neutrality. Achieving carbon neutrality requires a tonne for tonne reduction as compared to a specific financial investment (e.g. 25$ a tonne). Putting aside a monetary value based on a community's remaining emissions/tonnes may not result in the actual reductions needed to achieve net-zero emissions. Only measurable GHG reduction projects based on a recognized protocol will do so.

BC is a leader in the development of carbon neutral standards including offset regimes. Public sector organizations achieved carbon neutrality for 2010 in June of this year and have set a high standard for BC with regard to carbon neutrality. The Green Communities Committee Carbon Neutral Framework "Becoming Carbon Neutral" has been informed by this standard and modified to meet the needs of local government - in particular the option of local community investment in GHG reduction initiatives.

A6 AQUACULTURE AGREEMENT

WHEREAS on February 9, 2009, the Supreme Court ruled that the federal government—not the provinces—should regulate fish farms, prompting both orders of government to negotiate an Aquaculture Agreement that was reached on December 10, 2010;

AND WHEREAS neither the provincial nor federal government sought to consult with UBCM about how the Aquaculture Agreement would impact local governments, specifically those communities that have bylaws (including zoning) in place with respect to where and how fish farms operate:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request that the provincial and federal governments recognize the authorities and responsibilities of local governments with respect to aquaculture and immediately consult with them about the impact and implications of the new Aquaculture Agreement;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the provincial and federal governments recognize and respect local government bylaws (including zoning) in the siting, approval and operation of fish and shellfish farms.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Agriculture

In February 2009, the BC Supreme Court ruled that finfish aquaculture is a fishery, the regulation of which is a federal responsibility.

The BC Supreme Court ruling did not change the Provincial (and therefore local governments') authority to issue land tenures for aquaculture under the *Land Act*. Accordingly, local governments retain the ability to zone and establish bylaws with respect to where aquaculture operations are appropriately located, as long as they do not impinge on the Federal fisheries jurisdiction over aquaculture "fishery" operations.

The Canada-British Columbia Agreement on Aquaculture Management was drafted to set out the responsibilities of both governments and provide certainty regarding the manner in which the two governments will collaborate and facilitate effective coordination. The process the Federal Government follows in making licensing decisions is the purview of Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

The Province recognizes the importance of local governments' role and shares the Union of British Columbia Municipalities' interest in ensuring the best results for local governments and communities with an interest in aquaculture. The Province will continue to send to local governments aquaculture tenure applications through the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations and liaise with local government on specific files.

A7 TREATY ADVISORY COMMITTEE FUNDING

WHEREAS the 2008 Memorandum of Understanding between UBCM and the Province of British Columbia included 'New Relationship' matters within the mandate of the Treaty Advisory Committee, in addition to treaty negotiations;

AND WHEREAS there is no formal pathway within the context of New Relationship funding which includes the interests of local governments;

AND WHEREAS the information gained from these advisory committees is invaluable for negotiations with First Nations thereby benefitting all parties:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM urge the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations & Reconciliation to provide adequate core funding to Treaty Advisory Committees and related organizations.

Response: Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation

The Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation's vision is to build positive and enduring relationships with First Nations and Aboriginal people in British Columbia through treaties and other lasting agreements.

The Ministry recognizes that respectful relationships between local governments and First Nations are necessary in order to effectively plan and work together on matters of mutual interest.

While core provincial funding for treaty advisory committees is not available at this time, the Ministry is committed to ongoing communication with local governments and will consider other opportunities to support local governments as valued advisors of provincial treaty negotiation teams.

B1 DUTY OF ELECTED OFFICIALS TO RESPECT CONFIDENTIALITY

WHEREAS the breach of Section 117 of the *Community Charter* (Duty to respect confidentiality) by elected officials undermines the public trust in the elected body and exposes the local government to unacceptable and avoidable risk;

AND WHEREAS the available legal remedies for sanction of elected officials who breach the duty to respect confidentiality are insufficient:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM petition the provincial government to provide additional provisions for sanction of elected officials who breach the duty to respect confidentiality, including but not limited to, amending Section 110 of the *Community Charter* (Circumstances in which a person is disqualified from office on council), to include "the breach of Section 117 of the *Community Charter* (Duty to respect confidentiality)".

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development

The Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development is committed to working with the UBCM and the Local Government Leadership Academy (LGLA) to enhance the preparedness of locally elected officials for the responsibilities of elected office - including understanding confidentiality and other accountability provisions in the *Community Charter*.

The Ministry is prepared to work with the UBCM and the LGLA to explore ways to strengthen policies and practices to further effective and fair implementation of accountability measures for locally elected officials. However, a full review of the confidentiality issue, including consideration of the importance of "whistle-blowers" in some situations, would be necessary before considering any legislative amendments.

B3 FIRE & POLICE SERVICES COLLECTIVE BARGAINING ACT

WHEREAS the *Fire and Police Services Collective Bargaining Act* was enacted over fifteen years ago with the goal of facilitating collective bargaining with fire and police;

AND WHEREAS the results are that the Act has not led to improved collective bargaining rather it has resulted in the parties invariably ending up at an impasse and the collective agreement being settled through binding arbitration with awards that are not in line with the economic reality of British Columbia communities:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request that the Minister of Labour review the impact of the *Fire and Police Services Collective Bargaining Act* on collective bargaining to determine if it has met its goals that were established at the time.

RESPONSE: Labour, Citizens' Services and Open Government

The purpose of the *Fire and Police Services Collective Bargaining Act* (*Act*) was to provide access for unions and employers to binding interest arbitration to resolve a collective bargaining dispute. By proceeding to arbitration, the parties are able to maintain the ability to engage in face-to-face negotiations and avoid a strike or lockout which would interrupt the delivery of services critical to the protection of human life and property. The *Act* has achieved this objective.

The *Act* contains specific provisions containing criteria to which an arbitrator must have regard in making his/her decision. These criteria, such as the interest and welfare of the community, are purposely broad and allow the parties to raise before the arbitrator the appropriate weight to be given to each of them. Where a party applies to the Minister for direction to proceed to arbitration in a particular dispute, it is free to request that the Minister consider specifying additional terms of reference.

It should be noted that in applying the *Act*, arbitrators are to have regard to the terms and conditions of employment for other groups of the employer's employees. As a result, employers should be mindful about the outcome of freely negotiated collective agreements when engaging in collective bargaining with police and fire unions.

At this time, the Ministry of Labour, Citizens' Services and Open Government has no plans to review the impact of the *Act* on collective bargaining. The Ministry will continue to actively monitor collective bargaining in the sectors covered by the *Act*.

B4 EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT BC & ROAD RESCUE SERVICES

WHEREAS Emergency Management BC is initiating a major policy review in 2011 and their current policy regarding road rescue services is to provide a provincial task number for road rescue responses outside of a municipal boundary, but not within a municipal boundary;

AND WHEREAS there are some municipalities in BC with very large rural boundaries that contain resource or similar roads that are wilderness and remote in nature, yet are accessed by tourists and others, increasing the frequency of motor vehicle accidents requiring a municipal response:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM lobby the Province of BC (Emergency Management BC) to develop policy exceptions that provide a provincial task number to a municipality responding to a road rescue in a wilderness or remote area within a municipal boundary.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

There are approximately 50,000 motor vehicle accidents in British Columbia each year. Emergency Management BC (EMBC) is involved in roughly 2,500 of these by providing task assistance (cost reimbursement, WCB and liability coverage) to road rescue organizations – fire departments responding outside fire response boundaries, road rescue societies and search and rescue teams.

Auto extrication extraction is a highly specialized skill that requires ongoing training and expensive, specific equipment and tools.

It is the choice of the municipal government with the establishment of a by-law to allow their fire department to respond outside of their jurisdiction.

EMBC policy does not allow for a provincial task number within a District boundary as this would create an inconsistent approach to other Districts which may encompass wilderness or remote areas within their municipal boundaries.

B5 LOCAL GOVERNMENT EMERGENCY RESPONSE COSTS

WHEREAS the tanker truck incident on April 16, 2011 in Goldstream Park on Highway 1 (the TransCanada Highway) resulted in the complete closure of this highway for approximately twenty-four hours, and necessitated the response of four fire rescue services and one hazardous materials unit, the District of Sooke being one of them;

AND WHEREAS the resulting administrative setup provided significant challenges for response team members in terms of being reimbursed financially:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM call on the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia and other agencies or provincial ministries as needed, with regard to facilitating the reimbursement process for volunteer and career fire rescue services across British Columbia in a timely manner.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment

There are approximately 3,500 hazardous material incidents reported across British Columbia each year.

The BC Ministry of Environment is the lead provincial ministry responsible for provincial preparedness and response management for spills of oils and hazardous materials.

Fire Departments are able to recover reasonable costs when responding to a hazardous materials incident outside of their local government responsibility when they are under the direction of a Ministry of Environment Environmental Emergency Response Officer Please contact the Environmental Emergency Program at 250 387-9955 for a guidance document that provides further clarification.

Local governments are strongly encouraged to develop their own cost recovery bylaw(s) to enable them to directly recover the costs they incur from the responsible party.

The Ministry of Environment is currently reviewing industry response capability and capacity requirements which may lead to additional requirements for industry to ensure they are able to manage and respond to their incidents (this may help reduce local government response costs).

B6 FIRST RESPONDER TRAINING FUNDING

WHEREAS provincial funding supporting the training of volunteer first responders has been reduced by the Emergency and Health Services Commission;

AND WHEREAS the reduction of funding will impact all fire departments throughout BC that are delivering emergency pre-hospital assistance under the Provincial Emergency Medical Assistant First Responder Program;

AND WHEREAS emergency medical services is a provincial responsibility which is delivered, in part, by a majority of local governments in BC through their fire departments under the Provincial Medical Assistant First Responder Program and which has been acknowledged by the provincial government as a valuable program in providing patient support until paramedics arrive:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM lobby the provincial government to continue its commitment to fully financially support the training of dedicated volunteer first responders to ensure they have the skills required to provide high quality pre-hospital emergency assistance to patients where first responders are the first to arrive on the scene.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health, Emergency and Health Services Commission

First Responders are a key element in the provision of pre-hospital care within British Columbia. They provide basic first aid and emergency health services, including CPR and cardiac defibrillation, while paramedics are enroute to a medical emergency.

Training is a critical component in ensuring that first responders across British Columbia can provide the appropriate care when needed. The Emergency and Health Services Commission (EHSC) proactively supports agencies that have little or no resources by funding training sessions in rural and remote communities.

The EHSC provides financial support for composite and volunteer fire departments in communities with a population less than 25,000. EHSC will reimburse the cost of programs taken through the Academy of Emergency Training, Canadian Red Cross and the Justice Institute School of Health Sciences.

B7 SCRAP METAL LICENSING & REGULATING

WHEREAS damage and loss resulting from the theft of metals costs British Columbia millions of dollars each year;

AND WHEREAS there are no mechanisms in place to regulate, control, monitor and enforce the market for scrap metal that provides the economic basis for metal theft, vandalism and property crime:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM lobby the provincial government to implement a system to licence and regulate the scrap metal economy in British Columbia and in the process consider different methods of implementing the regulation, such as the use of a model bylaw to allow local government to assist in enforcing the regulation or mandating the Product Stewardship Program with responsibility to implement and monitor these regulations.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

The Province recognizes that metal theft has grown to be a significant public safety concern in communities across British Columbia.

In response to calls for Provincial Government leadership on the issue, British Columbia legislation entitles the *Metal Dealers and Recyclers Act* in November 2011 to combat scrap metal theft by regulating the scrap metal and recycling industry. This will involve the creation of sales transaction and recordkeeping requirements; a provincial registry of metal dealers and recyclers; and penalties for non-compliance.

The Province is continuing to work towards an integrated solution that is operationally sound and that builds on the achievements made by local governments, industry and police in combating metal theft.

B8 KEEP OF PRISIONERS COST

WHEREAS Corrections BC has an annual budget of $4.3 million dollars per year that has a fixed quarterly budget of $1.075 million to reimburse RCMP detachments for all provincial prisoners kept in locally owned RCMP buildings;

AND WHEREAS this funding allocation per prisoner fluctuates in accordance to the number of prisoners kept each quarter (most recent average reimbursement of $6.63 per prisoner per hour) and does not reflect the true operating cost to the local government for keeping these prisoners:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the Province of BC reimburse the full costs incurred in housing provincial prisoners that are held in locally owned RCMP detachment buildings.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

Municipal governments are 100% responsible for the cost of operating municipal police lockups. The province is dependent on lockup beds to house adult and youth, male and female provincial prisoners where correctional facilities are not immediately accessible.

As a consequence of the increased number of prisoners, the provincial prisoner rate declined on average 34% between FY 03/04 and FY 09/10. In the first quarter of FY 03/04 the rate was $9.79 an hour, or $235 a day - in the third quarter of FY 10/11 the hourly rate was $7.10 or $170.40 a day.

The Province has administered Keep of Prisoners (KOP) since the 1970's - prior to 2002, there were no written agreements or adequate prisoner definitions. This led many municipalities to believe the province was responsible for the majority of their lockup operating costs as the historical statistics used to apportion costs were generated by an inequitable prisoner accounting method that favoured municipalities.

For the last 7 years KOP has remained on budget as an effective, equitable and accountable program that operates in collaboration with police and local governments.

Any reduction in municipal lockup services for provincial prisoners would place additional pressures on the justice system, including correctional centre over-capacity, prisoner per diems, transportation costs/schedules, admissions/discharges, prisoner safety, policing budgets and priorities.

B9 PROVINCIAL COURT OF BC – JUDICIAL RESOURCES

WHEREAS it has been identified in the "Report of the Provincial Court of BC Concerning Judicial Resources, September, 2010" that the Provincial Court of British Columbia cannot presently fulfil its mandate to provide timely access to justice as the judicial complement is below that in 2005;

AND WHEREAS as a result of insufficient judicial and support staff levels the Provincial Court of BC's ability to provide services to the citizens of British Columbia is inefficient and is affecting the administration of justice in the province;

AND WHEREAS communities throughout the province are being adversely impacted due to unreasonable delays and the increasing backlog regarding all types of cases within the Provincial Court of BC jurisdiction:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM lobby the Province of BC to promptly increase the judicial complement, court registry staffing, and sheriff's services as is necessary to prevent further deterioration of the Court's services to the public.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Attorney General

The Ministry of Attorney General (Ministry) appreciates UBCM raising the issue of resourcing of the courts and court services.

The Ministry is committed to working with the judiciary and other justice system partners to streamline and improve the administration of justice in British Columbia. We are working to provide the highest level of judicial resources possible within budget limitations.

On July 24, 2011, the Government of British Columbia announced five new Provincial Court judge appointments for the Lower Mainland, Okanagan and northern British Columbia. These appointments are in addition to the nine appointments made last year in response to the Provincial Court of British Columbia's request for additional judges. These appointments will help reduce the time it takes court cases to go to trial so they can be heard in a timely manner. Further, judges are also being rotated into communities where needed to ensure court hearings proceed.

With regard to staffing in sheriff services, as a result of the concerns raised by the Chief Justice of the Court of Appeal, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of British Columbia and the Chief Judge of the Provincial Court of British Columbia, the Ministry restored the hours for auxiliary and part-time deputy sheriffs to former levels. Court Services Branch has also recently hired 36 new deputy sheriff candidates who have now begun the training program to become sheriffs.

The Criminal Justice Branch is covering critical Crown counsel shortages with ad hoc prosecutors (private bar lawyers) to address service delivery pressures. Additionally, some limited hiring has begun to increase resource levels to respond to additional judicial resources that were announced in early summer 2011.

In addition, the Ministry has introduced a number of initiatives to improve access, increase efficiency and enhance justice system integration, including audio and video conferencing, the video interview pilot project in Vancouver and Surrey, the criminal case management pilot in Victoria, fax filing and court services online.

B10 RESPONDING TO THE THREAT OF TSUNAMIS

WHEREAS the coastal communities of British Columbia are at risk of significant loss of life in the event of a tsunami;

AND WHEREAS the key to effectively managing the risk within each community, in the event of a tsunami, is a warning system;

AND WHEREAS many coastal communities have limited financial resources to provide critical emergency response services:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM lobby the provincial government to increase financial support for all coastal communities to provide emergency response warning systems.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

Since 2006, the Province has had a Provincial Emergency Notification System (PENS), which rapidly delivers tsunami notifications to potentially impacted coastal communities, major stakeholders such as RCMP and utilities owners and the media. Notifications are delivered via phone, e-mail and fax.

To reach the individual and household level, PENS will soon be augmented with the social media tool "Twitter". In addition, the Province, Environment Canada and the Canadian Coast Guard jointly maintain and operate weather radio transmitters that deliver tsunami notifications to weather radios in potentially impacted areas.

Equipment for local emergency response may be eligible for funding through the Province's Joint Emergency Preparedness Program (JEPP). Emergency response warning systems are a priority for government and this request is being considered.

B11 FLOOD MITIGATION PROGRAMS

WHEREAS current funding programs for flood mitigation that require 1/3 of project funding from local government as well as requiring that the local government assume ownership of the works for a period of 10 years, in some cases result in an unrealistic burden on affected taxpayers;

AND WHEREAS the financial inability of the residents to meet the requirements of the funding program often precludes a planned proactive approach to known flood issues thereby minimizing environmental impacts associated with mitigative works and instead results in a reactive approach when an imminent threat occurs, resulting in greater costs and greater environmental damage, in addition to the traumatic and sometimes devastating impacts on affected residents:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM lobby the Province to develop programs that take a proactive approach to flood mitigation rather than continuing to try to download additional responsibilities on local governments that are ill-equipped and lacking in financial capacity to address these situations in a proactive manner that best respects the residents and the environment.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

Since 2008, the federal and provincial governments have partnered to protect communities across British Columbia by providing funding for flood mitigation projects. Funding arrangements are administered under the Federal Building Canada Plan and the Provincial Flood Protection Program of Emergency Management BC and are cost shared between the federal, provincial and local government of the approved flood protection project.

The Province recognizes that flood protection is a shared responsibility and its success is dependent upon support from all levels of government. Local governments demonstrate this commitment by providing a financial contribution toward flood protection works undertaken as part of the Flood Protection Program. This cost sharing maximizes the funds available to assist communities with flood protection initiatives and is in keeping with the Province's commitment to provide support for local governments to plan for, prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters and emergencies within their jurisdictions.

Local governments are also required to assume the ownership and maintenance of the permanent mitigation works undertaken. This ownership ensures that works are not abandoned, thus potentially creating a future hazard.

The Province is committed to working with local governments to understanding issues regarding flood mitigation in their communities and recognizes that cooperation of all levels of government is necessary to provide public safety in communities.

B12 DIKING DISTRICTS

WHEREAS the Province desires to transfer responsibility of operating and maintaining diking district assets to local government;

AND WHEREAS the cost of operating and maintaining diking district assets, and the associated liabilities of operating and maintaining the assets are undefined:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request that the Province of BC undertake a full cost, operating and condition assessment of diking district assets to determine the most appropriate and cost effective delivery of flood protection to property owners;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that if local government provided flood protection is deemed to be in the best interests of property owners, the Province of BC be asked to provide adequate funding for the operation, maintenance and rehabilitation of the diking district assets.

Response: Ministry of Forests Lands and Natural Resource Operations

In 2003, the more than one hundred year old *Drainage Ditch and Dike Act* (*DDDA*) was amended to include a sunset clause (now December 2012). The outdated provisions of the *DDDA* impact the ability of the five remaining diking districts incorporated under this Act to effectively operate and maintain their diking systems. The repeal of the *DDDA* will result in the transfer of diking authority responsibilities from these five local taxpayer-supported diking districts to their respective local governments (Surrey, Coquitlam, Metro Vancouver and Spallumcheen). Local governments, under the *Local Government Act* and *Community Charter,* have the necessary administrative authority to provide integrated local services, including the operation and maintenance of dikes.

A full cost, operating and condition assessment of diking district assets has been requested. The ministry agrees that comprehensive assessments of the diking districts should be completed prior to any transfer of diking authority responsibilities. These assessments would determine if there are significant deficiencies in the condition of the dikes and make recommendations with respect to capital projects, administration, operation and maintenance. The ministry is currently pursuing possible sources of funding to complete the assessments and rehabilitation.

The ministry is committed to working with UBCM and the affected local governments on this matter.

B13 911 CALL LEVY

WHEREAS cost recovery for 911 Emergency Telephone Service should be established on an equitable system based on the likelihood of its use, rather than by parcel tax, which over-taxes ranchers and under-taxes mobile home parks, or on the value of residents' land or improvements, which is irrelevant to the service;

AND WHEREAS the CRTC (Canadian Radio-television Telecommunications Commission) provides local governments with an option for 911 cost recovery as it mandates all service providers, upon request, to bill and collect a 911 fee or levy on behalf of a local authority; however, this is only available for wire line telephone services:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM lobby the provincial government to enact legislation that would require wireless telephone service providers to collect 911 service costs on behalf of local governments, upon request, as has been done in Quebec, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

The Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General is currently reviewing options related to 911 emergency services, including a Call Access Levy on wireless phones.

Introduction of a Call Access Levy on wireless phones will be considered by the Province if a consensus on a recommended model can be achieved between local authorities and industry. Such a model will be required to:

- Improve public safety;
- Contain costs for all stakeholders; and,
- Meet public expectations regarding 911 services and funding

B14 PROVISION & FUNDING OF VICTIM SERVICES

WHEREAS the matter of costs to local governments for providing police based victim services continues to escalate due to the increased demand for the service;

AND WHEREAS the authority for providing victim services is the responsibility of the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General for victim's issues, development of legislation, policies and programs, and for providing training and delivering and funding programs that support victims and their families:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM urge the Province of BC, through the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General to assume all responsibility for the provision and funding of victim services within the province of BC.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

The Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General has a funding formula in place to distribute available funding dollars for victim service programs throughout the province. The formula is based on population and police strength and was updated in fiscal 08/09 which resulted in an average funding increase of 22% per program.

Police-based victim service programs are cost shared with local governments in communities that contribute to their policing costs. This cost-sharing approach recognizes the critical role that police-based victim service programs play in police and community response to crime and trauma, particularly around crisis response services.

The Province provides over $70 million annually in funding for service to support victims of crime including $12.494 million for victim service programs, $16.448 million for violence against women programs, $12.343 for the Crime Victim Assistance Program and $32 million for transition house services.

B15 CRIME PREVENTION PROGRAMS

WHEREAS crime prevention programs have assisted in the recovery of over $800,000 in property and $17 million in seizure of drugs in BC which goes into provincial general revenue;

AND WHEREAS all crime prevention programs are supported solely by local fundraising efforts:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM lobby the Province of BC to include funding for crime prevention and community policing programs from proceeds of crime revenues.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

The Province supports a number of crime prevention programs and initiatives that promote the safety and well being of children, youth and communities in British Columbia and target at-risk youth by addressing risk factors and building protective factors.

The Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General provided $375,000 this year in direct funding to support community organizations in their crime prevention initiatives including the BC Crime Prevention Association, BC Crime Stoppers, Block Watch Society of BC and the WISH Society. The Ministry also worked with our federal and provincial partners to provide an additional $768,000 to support gang prevention, sexual exploitation prevention and aboriginal crime prevention initiatives.

The Province has used proceeds from civil forfeitures to support the prevention of crime or remediation to victims. Since the *Civil Forfeiture Act* came into force, the Province has provided $3 million in crime prevention grants and compensation to victims.

The Civil Forfeiture Office is entirely self-funded, deriving all its operating income from the forfeitures it obtains through successful settlements. If all proceeds were redirected away from the Civil Forfeiture Office it would inhibit, or possibly eliminate, the ability to manage the program.

B17 DETERMINING ELECTION RESULTS WHERE A TIE VOTE EXISTS AFTER A JUDICIAL RECOUNT

WHEREAS the Province has announced that over the next three years it will be working toward the implementation of a range of legislative amendments relating to local government elections based on the recommendations of the Local Government Elections Task Force, which presents an opportunity to also consider, review and consult in relation to additional election issues;

AND WHEREAS a resolution relating to runoff elections was endorsed by UBCM in 1996 (resolution B53) but was not implemented by the Province even though it would provide a fair and cost-effective runoff election process in the event of a tie vote following judicial recount:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the provincial government to enact amendments to elections legislation that would:

- permit runoff elections to be staged on a reduced scale, as compared to the original election (i.e. limited number of polls); and
- provide that runoff elections be between only those candidates who received the same number of votes following judicial recount.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development

A local government can choose not to hold a runoff election by including a provision in its election bylaw stating that in the case of a tie vote, a draw of names by lot will decide who is elected.

Where a local government chooses to hold a runoff election in the case of a tie vote, it may be fairer to allow the electorate to choose among all of the unsuccessful candidates rather than the two that are tied – particularly where there are other candidates who received votes that were very close to the number received by the two candidates who were tied. Also, electors may decide to vote for different candidates than they did in the first election.

The cost to hold a runoff election for two candidates does not appear to be appreciably different than the cost to hold an election for more than two candidates.

Allowing a runoff election to be staged on a reduced scale from the general local election compromises the accessibility of the electorate to the voting process. However, a local government could include provisions in its election bylaw to eliminate the conduct of special and advance voting opportunities, or mail ballot voting, when a runoff election is conducted.

B18 REGULATION OF INSTALLATION OF SIGNS, SPEED & PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS WITHIN MUNICIPAL BOUNDARIES

WHEREAS the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure has the legislative authority to make and issue regulations under the *Transportation Act*;

AND WHEREAS the Minister may make regulations respecting the use of provincial public highways by persons or vehicles:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request that a municipal Council may, by a bylaw with the approval of the Minister, be granted the legislative authority to regulate the installation of signs, regulations of speed and pedestrian crossings on arterial highways within the municipal boundaries.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

The Province works to provide a consistent application of speed zones as drivers travel the BC highway system, based on factors including highway alignment, design, adjacent land use, pedestrian movements and aforementioned considerations. If municipalities were granted authority to regulate motor vehicle speeds and pedestrian crossings on arterial highways, it may be more difficult to maintain consistent driver expectation of speed limits across the highway system. Hence, the Province will retain the sole authority of setting speed limits and pedestrian crossings.

The Province will continue to work co-operatively with municipalities to address speed and safety issues, bearing in mind provincial policies, local conditions and engineering treatments.

B19 BIKE LANE SWEEPING

WHEREAS governments invest in the provision of cycling lanes adjacent to provincial roadways to promote healthy lifestyles and provide alternatives to single occupancy vehicles;

AND WHEREAS gravel and other debris on the cycling paths pose a risk to cyclists and act as an impediment to the use of alternative modes of transportation:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM urge the Ministry of Transportation & Infrastructure to amend road maintenance contracts to increase the frequency of bike lane and highway shoulder sweeping.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (Ministry), through its maintenance contractors, provides many maintenance services that benefit cyclists (e.g., shoulder sweeping, debris removal, line painting, pavement maintenance etc.). Ministry staff regularly meet with the maintenance contractor to discuss the needs of all road users, including cyclists.

The sweeping of highway shoulders is provided as part of the Ministry's maintenance contracts. Highway conditions are monitored and sweeping is completed each spring, and when debris accumulates and creates a safety concern for highway users. In areas of higher cycling traffic, the Ministry and the maintenance contractor will evaluate the amount of sweeping occurring to determine if the frequency of sweeping is appropriate for the amount of cycling traffic on that road.

The Ministry will consider the benefits and extra cost of additional sweeping and will work with communities across the province to identify areas for consideration of additional service.

B20 OFF ROAD VEHICLE (ORV) LICENSING & SAFETY

WHEREAS the provincial government planned to introduce legislation in late 2010 to provide for ORV licensing and safety features;

AND WHEREAS such legislation would greatly enhance back-country activities in rural British Columbia:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM urge the Province of British Columbia to enact ATV licensing legislation as soon as possible in 2011.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

In November 2009, government announced that the Off-Road Vehicle (ORV) Management Framework would be implemented by regulatory changes in approximately two years. In June 2010, government formally established an ORV Joint Advisory Group with twenty provincial stakeholder associations, including UBCM, to ensure the successful implementation of the new ORV laws. A presentation by ministry staff on the ORV framework was well received by regional districts at the annual meeting of the electoral area directors.

In September 2010, UBCM formed an ORV local government working group comprising municipalities and regional districts from across the province. Collaboration between the working group and ministry staff has been highly successful.

New ORV laws are being rolled out in phases, starting in November 2011 with safer highway crossings. Full implementation is expected by fall 2012. This timeframe allows for necessary legislative improvements to modernize ORV legislation and address key issues raised by stakeholders, including better enforcement.

B21 RAILCAR SERVICE

WHEREAS there are a limited number of railway companies providing service in the province, and communities and industries rely on this mode of transportation for transporting their products to market;

AND WHEREAS it is difficult for industries to acquire sufficient railcars in a timely manner:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request that the provincial and federal governments ensure that these railway companies provide adequate railcar service to all regions within the Province of British Columbia.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

The District of Mackenzie is served by CN Rail. The Canada Transportation Act (CTA) sets out the statutory common carrier obligations of federally-regulated railway companies and includes the services that a railway company must provide to accommodate traffic. Under these provisions, a railway company must provide, according to its powers, adequate and suitable accommodation for the receiving, loading, carrying, unloading and delivering of all traffic offered for carriage on its railway.

The CTA confers upon the Canadian Transportation Agency the authority to investigate a complaint with respect to the level of service offered. Upon application by a shipper, if the Agency determines that a railway company has not fulfilled its common carrier service obligations, it may order relief to the affected shipper.

Shippers in the District of Mackenzie should contact the Canadian Transportation Agency if they are of the opinion that CN Rail is not meeting its statutory common carrier obligations with respect to rail service.

B22 ALLOCATING CARBON TAX FOR TRANSIT FUNDING

WHEREAS the Province of British Columbia, through measures such as the Climate Action Charter, the Carbon Tax and the Provincial Transit Plan, has been a leader in recognizing the importance of reducing greenhouse gases;

AND WHEREAS local governments face significant financial challenges in order to increase transit services, a key element of the Provincial Greenhouse Gas Reduction Strategy;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province of British Columbia be requested to direct a portion of all carbon taxes collected to enable an increase in the proportional share of provincial funding for all transit services and programs.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Finance

The carbon tax is revenue neutral, meaning that all revenues collected from the carbon tax are returned to taxpayers and businesses through tax reductions.

The Revenue Neutral Carbon Tax Plan and Report presented in *Budget 2011* show the tax cuts that return carbon tax revenues to individuals and businesses.

The Province currently provides funding to local governments through a variety of sources and programs (e.g. Traffic Fine Revenue Sharing, Towns for Tomorrow, Building Canada Fund, unconditional Small Community and Regional District Basic Grants).

The Province also provides conditional grants to local governments under the Climate Action Revenue Incentive Program. Under the program eligible local governments receive a grant equal to 100 per cent of the carbon tax paid as a direct expenditure in the previous year. To date the program has provided nearly $7.8 million to local governments.

The government has introduced a number of measures and programs in the past several years to encourage and assist local governments to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. For example:

- Provincial Transit Plan infrastructure investments to the end of fiscal 2010/11 total over $448 million, including investments of over $304 million in Metro Vancouver and over $143 million throughout the rest of the province.
- $292 million to support local government infrastructure projects;

- $68 million for Towns for Tomorrow that provides infrastructure funding for smaller communities;

- $20 million to help switch remote communities, mainly First Nations, from diesel-generated power plants to sources of clean electricity, and to improve the energy efficiency of their homes and businesses;

- Since 2001, the province has provided or announced over $143 million to cycling in over 75 communities. This includes:
    - Over $66 million for Highway project investments, including $50 million worth of cycling infrastructure for the Gateway Program.
    - $28.1 million for Bike BC, of which $8.4 million has been invested to date. Commitments include $10 million to be cost-shared with local governments to link their cycling networks with the Gateway Cycling Infrastructure.
    - $49.6 million in cycling infrastructure delivered in partnership with other levels of government. This includes $14.2 million in 2009/10 for cycling projects and cost sharing on 30 municipal roads projects that included cycling components through the Local Motion and Building Canada Programs.

- The Community Action on Energy Emissions program which provides funding, research assistance towards studies, policy work and implementation related to energy conservation and emissions reductions.

As well, the Smart Planning for Communities Initiative empowers communities to undertake planning that is longer-term, incorporates sustainability principles and leads to more compact, complete and energy efficient communities with reduced greenhouse gas emissions. As part of this initiative sustainability facilitators are available to local governments to help them undertake integrated sustainability planning and action.

B23 BC HYDRO FAIR COMPENSATION

WHEREAS Crown Corporations are expected to pay their fair share of property taxes by providing a grant-in-lieu;

AND WHEREAS private utilities pay property taxes to municipalities and regional districts on property including rights-of-way for distribution and transmission lines, and private utilities and BC Hydro provide municipalities a 1% tax on gross sales revenues within their jurisdictions;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM lobby the Province of British Columbia to explore the taxation of BC Hydro and implement a fair and equitable method of compensation to all local governments for the provision of local and regional services.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Finance

Government announced a revised grants-in-lieu policy in 2006 that created a transparent basis for calculating the grants that BC Hydro pays in respect of its generating facilities. The revised policy also increased the grants paid to communities that host and/or are impacted by those facilities.

Government also decided to not provide grants to regional districts for BC Hydro transmission and distribution lines. However, given the length of time since the last review, the issue of grants-in-lieu paid by BC Hydro with respect to its transmission and distribution assets, the Minister of Finance agreed to consider this resolution during the preparation of Budget 2012.

B24 VARYING TAX RATES

WHEREAS there is no legislative provision to allow municipalities to impose separate tax rates for each of land and improvements to encourage property owners to make significant improvements to their properties or to reduce the impact of sudden fluctuations in property values;

AND WHEREAS the current legislative mechanisms such as the revitalization tax exemption or the assessment averaging provisions provided under the *Community Charter* and Assessment Averaging & Phasing Regulation, B.C. Reg. 370/2003, respectively, have not been proven to be useful tools for mitigating the impact of uneven assessment changes on taxation:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province be lobbied to amend Section 197 of the *Community Charter* to allow municipalities to have the flexibility of levying separate tax rates for each of land and improvements for each property class.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development

Although the variable tax rate system does not currently contain legislative authority to allow municipalities to set differing property tax rates for land and improvements, there are other mechanisms available through the *Community Charter* and Regulations. Section 216 of the *Community Charter,* Local Service Taxes, allows costs to be recovered through taxes imposed on land, on improvements, or on both. Municipalities can use local service taxes as part of their taxation structure to meet their specific community needs such as to encourage property owners to make significant improvements to their property, or reduce the impact of sudden fluctuations in property values.

Revitalization Tax Exemption provisions were amended in 2007 to broaden their application. Only in the last few years have municipalities actually started to take advantage of this tool which can be used for a wide variety of purposes including providing tax relief for property owners who make significant improvements to their properties.

B25 UNIVERSITY PROPERTY TAX PAYMENTS

WHEREAS section 27(2)(w) of the *University Act* grants the Board of Governors of a university the following powers:

(w) to pay to a municipality incorporated under an Act a grant in a year not exceeding the lesser of

> (i) the amount that would be payable as general municipal taxes in the year on property of the university within the municipality if the property were not exempt from these taxes, and
>
> (ii) the amount specified by the minister or calculated in the manner specified by the minister;

AND WHEREAS municipalities have identified considerable loss of tax revenue due to the low amounts calculated under *University Act* section 27(2)(w)(ii), but local governments have noted no provincial action in response to UBCM resolution 2008-B104, which requested the Province to amend the *University Act* by replacing section 27(2)(w) with the following:

> To pay to a municipality incorporated by or under an Act a grant in a year equal to general municipal taxes in the year on property of the university within the municipality if the property were not exempt from these taxes;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM urge the Province to address the issue of university grants-in-lieu of taxes by amending section 27(2)(w) of the *University Act* to specify that a university must pay to a municipality a grant equal to general municipal taxes.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Finance

The Minister of Finance agreed to consider this resolution during the preparation of Budget 2012.

B26 LIQUOR TAX ALLOCATION

WHEREAS the abuse of alcohol places a burden on society and is a contributing factor to homelessness;

AND WHEREAS dealing with the effects of alcohol abuse places an undue strain on a local government tax base;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the Province of BC to allocate 5% of the existing revenue received from the sale of liquor sold through rural agency stores, licensed retail stores and government liquor stores and that these funds be directed to the local government in which the outlet is located and be used to support local drug and alcohol awareness and prevention programs for youth and adults.

MINISTRY OF FINANCE RESPONSE

The Province currently provides funding to local governments through a variety of sources and programs (e.g. Towns for Tomorrow, Building Canada Fund, Strategic Community Investment Fund).

The government also transfers 100 per cent of net traffic fine revenues to local governments for community policing, crime prevention and other initiatives to help make communities safer. This represents over $383 million in additional revenue for local governments since 2004.

Government is also working to prevent drunk driving. Drivers who blow once in the "fail" range, or three times within five years in the "warn" range, are required to participate in the rehabilitative Responsible Driver Program.
The Province is projected to spend over $1.3 billion this year to address mental health and substance use problems. This is up 47% from 2001. A number of initiatives have been undertaken to support British Columbians dealing with mental health and substance abuse challenges:

- The government's recently released policy framework, *Healthy Minds, Healthy People: A Ten-Year Plan to Address Mental Health and Substance Use in British Columbia,* outlines a vision for prevention of mental illness and problematic substance use that is comprehensive and reaches across multiple sectors.

- As part of the HealthyStart component of HealthyFamilies BC, the Ministry of Health has announced that a public health nurse led, home visiting and parent training program for vulnerable first-time mothers and their children will be launched in 2012; the Nurse Family Partnership program has a proven track record of preventing and reducing harms from substance use over the long term for both vulnerable mothers and their children.

- The Ministry of Health and the BC Medical Association have developed and released a new primary care tool and supports to screen patients for problematic drinking and to intervene appropriately.

- The Ministry of Health has worked with the Ministry of Education and the University of Victoria's Centre for Addictions Research of BC (CARBC) to develop and implement iMinds, a package of learning resources focused on substance use and mental wellness targeting students in grades 7 – 10.

B27 PUBLIC LIBRARY FUNDING

WHEREAS public libraries enhance the lives of all British Columbians and are an essential resource in all the communities they serve, especially in times of economic hardship;

AND WHEREAS reduced provincial funding impacts the ability of libraries to adequately provide services, materials, and maintain facilities:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request that the provincial government restore funding for BC libraries and reading centres to the levels that were achieved as part of the strategic plan prior to 2009.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Education

Funding for the public library sector is maintained at $14 million for 2011. This is 60 percent more funding than in 2001. The Province has protected core operating grants despite the global economic downturn, and is working to enhance shared infrastructure.

Five years ago, the Province invested $12 million to implement the public library strategic plan Libraries Without Walls. Flowing from this plan, the Province and public libraries have launched several province-wide initiatives that have generated substantial economies of scale, enhanced the stability of libraries and improved organizational infrastructure. The powerful synergies of these partnerships and shared strategic priorities are netting tremendous benefits and laying the groundwork for future investment. As a result, libraries are in a much stronger position today, offering more services and dynamic collections than ever before.

Given today's fiscal realities, the Province cannot invest in "business as usual." Instead, the Province must explore all opportunities to maximize investment in strategic partnerships, leveraging existing capacities for greater shared benefits. For maximum effectiveness, therefore, provincial funding is targeted to collaborative literacy and technology equity initiatives aimed at improving services, reducing costs and increasing access.

B28 BCLC REVENUE ALLOCATION

WHEREAS municipalities provide critical services such as policing, fire protection, roads, water, sewer, garbage and recycling, parks and recreation services and are facing increased infrastructure deficits that cannot be funded solely through property taxes;

AND WHEREAS all residents of the province contribute to the profit of the British Columbia Lottery Corporation:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government be requested to establish an equitable formula without affecting casino revenue currently allocated, to share the profits from British Columbia Lottery Corporation with all BC local governments.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

Host local governments receive 10% of the net casino gaming revenue from casinos and community gaming centres within their jurisdiction. In 2010/11, the Province distributed $82.3 million in total to host local governments.

All residents of British Columbia directly benefit from revenues derived from gaming, which help pay for essential programs and services such as health care and education. In 2010/11, $147.3 million in gaming revenue was distributed through the Health Special Account and $691.8 million was distributed through the consolidated revenue fund.

Additionally, in 2010/11 the Province distributed $135 million in gaming grants to approximately 5,000 community organizations across British Columbia, so that important programs could be delivered at the local level.

Any requests to distribute net gaming revenue directly to all local governments must be evaluated in the context of the government's need to honour Host Local Government Agreements, fund essential services, and support locally-based community organizations.

B29 RURAL DIVIDEND

WHEREAS the "Rural British Columbia Project Discussion Paper Series", under an initiative called "Reversing the Tide", has identified a number of best practices that, if put in place, would spur economic revitalization in the rural BC economy;

AND WHEREAS reinvesting a percentage of the natural resource dollars back into the regions from which they are extracted has proven to be a positive step in rural economic revitalization in other parts of the world;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government be requested to develop a program that would provide additional financial and capacity building resources to communities by returning a fair share of the revenue created by resource industry activity in their respective regions.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development

In 2004/05 the provincial government created three economic initiative trusts which embody sound principles of regional and rural economic development – sufficient funding for long term self sufficiency; high level of community ownership and engagement; autonomous and independent; and, able to reflect local and regional priorities and aspirations. The Province has also attended workshops regarding rural resource revenues and rural community benefits, such as the 'Reversing the Tide' initiative.

The Province currently provides funding to local governments through a variety of grants or cost-sharing agreements (e.g. Small Community and Regional District grants and Traffic Fine Revenue Sharing grants) and infrastructure development programs where local government cost share (usually 50- 67% of the project cost) with senior levels of government.

Any proposed transfer of natural resource revenue or tax revenue to local governments must be evaluated in the context of the province's need to fund essential services.

B30 REVENUE SHARING FROM MINING ROYALTIES

WHEREAS mineral industry activity involves non renewable resources and creates demand on local government infrastructure and services such as community water systems, roads and emergency and protective services;

AND WHEREAS property taxation alone is often inaccessible and insufficient for affected communities within a region to provide needed services and infrastructure;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM call upon the provincial and federal governments to provide revenue sharing from natural resources for local governments affected by resource extractions in their regions.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Finance

The Province currently provides funding to local governments through a variety of sources and programs (e.g. Traffic Fine Revenue Sharing, Towns for Tomorrow, Building Canada Fund, unconditional Small Community and Regional District Basic Grants).

Any proposed transfer of natural resource revenue or tax revenue to local governments must be evaluated in the context of the province's need to fund essential services.

B31 INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING FOR SMALL COMMUNITIES

WHEREAS small communities under 2,500 population which are dependent on residential taxation are struggling to fund infrastructure improvements;

AND WHEREAS the federal and provincial governments have not committed to providing future funding for infrastructure upgrades:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM petition the federal and provincial governments to continue to fund Towns for Tomorrow, Local Motion and federal/provincial infrastructure programs.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community Sport and Cultural Development

The Province is aware that small communities are concerned about the continuation of infrastructure grant programs such as Towns for Tomorrow, LocalMotion and federal/provincial infrastructure programs.

The Ministry continues to work on developing funding programs that meet the needs of local governments in British Columbia. The $30 million Community Recreation Program, launched by the Honourable Christie Clark, Premier, at the 2011 UBCM Convention, builds on the success of the Towns for Tomorrow and LocalMotion programs. This new program, while open to all local governments, has a strong focus on small and rural communities recognizing the unique challenges they face with infrastructure improvements. The application deadline for the program was December 28 2011 with an expectation of approvals in the Spring of 2012.

Additionally, the province is in discussions with the federal government on the continuation of the Building Canada Fund with an expected signed agreement in place by 2014. Currently, there are no capital funding programs accepting applications at this time. In the near future, UBCM is expected to announce a new 2012 intake for applications to the Gas Tax pooled funds – General Strategic Priorities Fund and Innovations Fund.

B32 UNIVERSAL SOIL REMOVAL FEE

WHEREAS municipalities are permitted to implement soil removal fees to compensate for the fact that current assessment methodology limits the ability for municipalities to appropriately tax gravel operations;

AND WHEREAS gravel operators within municipal boundaries take the position that the imposition of a soil removal fee on their operations affects their ability to compete with gravel operators outside of municipal boundaries:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM lobby the provincial government to establish a universal soil removal fee that can be applied across the province, with the funds generated within a municipality accruing to the municipality and the funds generated in the regional district accruing to the regional district.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development

The implementation of a universal soil removal fee would remove the ability of local governments to vary the fee according to local circumstances. In addition, the courts have indicated that the fees must be related to direct costs of aggregate operations to the municipality, such as maintenance of roads damaged by gravel truck traffic. Regional districts do not have responsibility for roads and therefore, could not charge a similar fee.

Nevertheless, the Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development is could work with the UBCM and the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations to consider whether standard soil removal fees are in fact feasible for municipalities and regional districts, and the full range of implications of such an approach.

B33 REQUEST TO AMEND SECTION 941 OF THE *LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT*

WHEREAS local municipalities have a significant amount of parkland in established neighbourhoods;

AND WHEREAS local municipalities have insufficient capital funding to upgrade and/or maintain current parkland;

AND WHEREAS re-densification is taking place in older neighbourhoods, where new parks are not required;

AND WHEREAS the legislation requires that 5% parkland acquisition fees are to be used only to acquire new parkland;

AND WHEREAS municipalities should be given the option to utilize the 5% parkland acquisition fees to upgrade and/or maintain current parkland:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the UBCM request the Province of British Columbia to amend Section 941 of the *Local Government Act* to allow greater flexibility to municipalities with respect to how the 5% parkland acquisition fees are to be spent.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport, and Cultural Development

Funds in lieu of parkland dedication are specifically for the acquisition of parkland only. This is to support a policy goal that up to 5% of all new development area is devoted to urban green space, which is critical to maintaining liveable and sustainable communities. If some of this money is diverted to improvements for existing parks, there would be less money for parkland acquisition thus, defeating the purpose of the policy.

The Province fully understands that there is more to a park than land. A park must be developed for public use and enjoyment (trails, playgrounds, picnic tables, playing fields, and convenient parking). However, that is not the purpose of the parkland acquisition fund. The parkland acquisition provisions are designed to ensure that this green space is available for public use. Maintaining and upgrading these facilities beyond basic improvements provides a benefit to the wider community, and thus the cost of such improvements should be shared by all property owners.

Widening the scope of section 941 has been reviewed in the past by the Development Finance Review Committee (DFRC), which is chaired by the Ministry and includes representatives from local government, the Province, and the development community. Local governments have other revenue tools to finance improvements to the parks and as such, there was consensus that expanding the parkland dedication provisions to a wider range of services would not be pursued.

B34 INFRASTRUCTURE COSTS

WHEREAS the continual downloading of costs and responsibilities from provincial and federal governments to local governments is neither fair nor properly planned;

AND WHEREAS local governments do not have the tax base or capacity to maintain what were once the responsibilities of provincial and federal governments;

AND WHEREAS Canada faces a significant infrastructure deficit that requires the adequate attention of all levels of government:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM lobby the provincial and federal governments for a response to infrastructure needs that is based on a fair assessment of the financial and logistical capacity of all levels of government.

RESPONSE: Ministry Community, Sport and Cultural Development

The Province recognizes local government's concern with respect to the capital, operational and maintenance costs for infrastructure and the services that the infrastructure provides. The province also recognizes the shared responsibility that all levels of government have in ensuring this infrastructure, and the services it provides, is managed in an effective and efficient manner, supporting long-term viability and financial sustainability.

The Province continues to work on developing infrastructure funding programs that meet the needs of local governments in British Columbia. This includes ongoing discussions with the federal government and looking at opportunities to develop programs that address long-term infrastructure needs in a fair and equitable way.

B35 DEVELOPMENT COST CHARGES FOR SOLID WASTE INFRASTRUCTURE

WHEREAS the *Local Government Act* (Sections 932–937) allows local governments to collect development cost charges from developers, for local government parks, water, sewage, drainage and highways but not for solid waste infrastructure;

AND WHEREAS the costs to expand local government solid waste infrastructure capacity or upgrade facilities to accommodate population growth are substantial and can be assessed;

AND WHEREAS there is precedence for this type of funding, specifically, there are several jurisdictions in the United States of America that allow local governments to use a form of development cost charges to help fund solid waste management infrastructure:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government amend the *Local Government Act* to authorize collection of development cost charges by local governments for solid waste infrastructure.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport, and Cultural Development

Policy proposals regarding development cost charges are usually vetted through the Development Finance Review Committee (DFRC). The DFRC is a committee made up of representatives from the ministry, local government and the development community. Historically, development cost charges have been limited to specific types of capital (i.e. water, sewer, storm water, roads and parks). Expanding this definition to include solid waste management would be a significant change in policy scope. As such, it would be incumbent on local government to present a logical and well-supported proposal for such a change. DFRC would be willing to examine such a proposal taking into account the complexity of determining the following:

- eligibility of capital costs,
- suitability of levying development cost charge to recover such costs,
- methodology for apportioning such costs between existing and new development, and
- materiality of potential cost impacts on development.

Based on a thorough examination of this proposal, the DFRC would make a recommendation to the Province based on the merits of this proposal. The Province would take into account the recommendations of the DFRC plus an examination of broader provincial interests before making a final decision on the merits of the proposal.

Ministry staff are available for advice and to discuss the information necessary to bring forward this proposal to the DFRC for consideration.

B36 REVENUE SHARING WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENT

WHEREAS certain agricultural activities are undergoing extensive economic hardship;

AND WHEREAS the 2009 Farm Assessment Review Panel (FARP) conducted numerous public consultation sessions where concerns were raised that the present list of Primary Agricultural Products (PAP) was too restrictive:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the BC provincial government be encouraged to implement the recommendations made in their 2009 FARP Report as it relates to the review and modernization of the Primary Agricultural Production Schedule products;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Primary Agricultural Products list be modernized and expanded to include a wider scope of activities and value-added products such as food processing and other such examples as referenced in the 2009 FARP Report;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that there is a strong consensus indicating the need to review the list of products that constitute the PAP Schedule in the Farm Class Regulation and the need to recognize and include value-added products, more equine activities, new innovative agricultural products and activities.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development

The Province has already implemented the Farm Assessment Review Panel (FARP) recommendations for 2010, which clarified the practice of split classifying both Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) and non-ALR farm properties.

Based on an extensive review of the remaining recommendations, government will implement four recommendations starting in the 2013 assessment year:

- Government introduced Bill 8, *Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development Statutes Amendment Act, 2011* in October 2011 (received the Second Reading on November 14, 2011) to implement two of the FARP recommendations (i.e., retired farmer benefits and increased farm outbuildings exemptions).
- Government will also implement two FARP recommendations through regulatory amendments and policy changes (legislative authority already exists): 1) change the farm income reporting period to be consistent with that used by the Canada Revenue Agency; and 2) expand the PAP Schedule and provide more flexibility for farmers to meet farm status requirements.

Further details will be announced once the amendments come into force.

B37 BROWNFIELD SITES

WHEREAS there are numerous brownfield/contaminated sites within the Province of BC that have reductions in their assessed values and have an operating business on the site;

AND WHEREAS these sites benefit from the communities in which they are located and or have a perceived unfair advantage over other businesses in the neighbourhood due to the reduced property taxes they pay:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the BC Assessment Authority ensure any site with an operating business have its assessment values consistent with other similar properties regardless of actual or perceived contamination.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development

BC Assessment is required to assess properties at their market value. Valuing contaminated sites at their market value takes into account the current state of the property as well as the remediation required to achieve the intended use of the site and the time frame for any redevelopment. The assessed value must reflect the likely cost of remediation and the time frame required for that remediation, as the market will take those factors into consideration in determining market value.

In general, the market (and assessed) values of the properties will increase as remediation progresses. Once remediation is complete to the extent required for its intended use, the market value will reflect the value of a fully remediated property for its proposed use.

The assessment for a property is not typically changed to reflect contamination until a site is registered as a contaminated site.

B38 RECYCLING DEPOSIT & REFUND SYSTEM EXPANSION

WHEREAS the recycling of tires, batteries and other items benefits the environment, economy and society;

AND WHEREAS the Return-It beverage refund-deposit system achieves the highest return rate for recyclable materials in the province, by providing a direct incentive to users to recycle items and materials:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM petition the provincial government to mandate the expansion of deposit and refund systems currently used for beverage containers to other recyclables.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment

The addition of the Packaging and Printed Paper Product Category to the Recycling Regulation in May 2011 obligates the producers of all packaging to adequately provide for collection from residences and municipal property province-wide. Starting in May 2014, all containers that are not under the Beverage Container Product Category will be required to be collected and recycled regardless of material type, including milk and tetra-pack containers. There is no intention at this time to add deposit-refund obligations to any regulated products other than beverage containers.

Producers regulated under the Packaging and Printed Paper Product Category will have to consider collection methods that will meet recovery targets and will also need to consult with stakeholders when designing and implementing their stewardship programs. These consultations will likely occur in the Spring of 2012 given that the product stewardship plans are due to be submitted to the Ministry by November 19, 2012.

Local governments are encouraged to provide their input on efficient, convenient and environmentally preferable methods for packaging material collection during these consultations.

B39 PRODUCT STEWARDSHIP INADEQUACIES

WHEREAS BC product stewardship programs are funded through the collection of eco-fees paid by consumers at the time of product purchase;

AND WHEREAS inadequacies exist in the product stewardship programs for small or rural communities where eco-fees are paid by the consumer but there are no collection depots available thereby increasing the likelihood of inappropriate disposal:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM lobby the provincial government to increase the opportunities for accessibility by consumers in small or rural communities to collection depots.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment

The Recycling Regulation establishes stewardship responsibilities for producers of prescribed products. The regulation requires the provision of reasonable and free consumer access to collection facilities.

In May 2011, the Recycling Regulation was amended to make it a regulatory requirement to report annually on the total amount of the producer's product recovered in each regional district effective July 1, 2013. This will help inform rural service levels and ensure that stewardship programs are being adequately delivered. To enhance collection services for rural residents, the producers or their stewardship agencies continue to work toward expanding their return collection networks and many supplement their collection efforts with alternative options such as one day product round-ups or mail-back options.

Local governments are encouraged to participate in industry stakeholder consultations for new stewardship programs or during the 5 year stewardship plan reviews. Effective consultation may include suggesting results-based performance measurement criteria and performance targets that would demonstrate adequate rural coverage.

B41 ENDANGERED SPECIES & ECOSYSTEMS PROTECTION ACT

WHEREAS the rich biodiversity of British Columbia, which is of critical importance to maintaining ecosystem integrity and human well-being, is in danger from the more than 1,900 species that are at risk of extinction or extirpation in British Columbia;

AND WHEREAS there is little legislation in British Columbia to protect the vast majorities of species and ecosystems that are at risk of extinction:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM petition the Province to enact an effective *Species & Ecosystem Protection Act* to protect British Columbia's biodiversity.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment

In June 2010, the provincial government fulfilled a commitment made in the August 2009 throne speech by striking a provincial Species at Risk Task Force. The Task Force was charged with providing recommendations to the Government to help it update its vision for the conservation of species and ecosystems at risk and ensure British Columbia remains a leader in environmental sustainability.

The report of the Species at Risk Task Force was released on July 4th, 2011. The report makes 16 recommendations addressing legislation, environmental management, First Nations engagement and public engagement.

Among the recommendations regarding public engagement are several actions specific to local governments, including establishing a link with municipalities by coordinating the recommendations of the Task Force with the strategies proposed by the Local Government Species at Risk Working Group. This group, led by the Ministry of Environment, brings together representatives from provincial, municipal, and regional governments to discuss approaches to protecting species at risk on local government and private lands in BC.

The Province is currently studying the report in detail and will be delivering a formal response over the next few months. The public had the opportunity to provide submissions on the Report of the British Columbia Task Force on Species at Risk through the Ministry of Environment website. As government formulates its plan, all feedback received will be valued and the implications on all interests will be fully considered.

B42 CONTROL OF CANADA GEESE

WHEREAS the Canada Goose was introduced and habituated to the Capital Region in the early 1950s by the BC Fish & Wildlife Service to provide stock for hunting purposes;

AND WHEREAS recent population counts of Canada Geese now fluctuate between 3000 to 5000 in the Capital Region and these geese inflict significant damage to farms crops in Metchosin and on the Saanich Peninsula:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM work with the provincial and federal governments to manage and control burgeoning populations of Canada geese which, left uncontrolled, present major and significant human health and safety, food production, environmental, recreational, water quality and other impacts; and that UBCM support continued provincial support for the multi-phased approach adopted by the Peninsula Agriculture Commission.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

The Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations and the Ministry of Environment support efforts to resolve the Canada Goose problem in the Capital Region District as it addresses an important human-wildlife conflict affecting both rural and urban areas throughout BC. Although no direct scientific evidence demonstrates that fecal deposits on parks, golf courses, and other public areas adversely affect human health and water quality, we are aware of local concerns that have been raised on this issue.

We note also that while provincial wildlife agencies were involved in the translocation of Canada Geese to parts of BC for hunting opportunities, this could only be done with the full partnership and cooperation of the federal Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) as their legislation under the *Migratory Birds Convention Act* supersedes the authority of the provincial *Wildlife Act*. Therefore any remedies must receive CWS approval and be in line with their legislation and policies. All direct population reduction methods such as kill permits and egg addling come entirely under the purview of federal legislation. The CWS has recently created a revised management handbook, management plan guidance document, and frequently asked questions summary that address the issue.

In partnership with the CWS, hunting is the major tool available to the province for wildlife control. We have attempted to increase hunter harvest where possible by introducing multiple openings, but unfortunately the worst problems areas usually have been closed to hunting under municipal bylaws. This is perhaps something that we could work with the UBCM on as these municipal closures have compounded the problem by providing the conditions for rapid, unchecked population growth.

Nonetheless, we recognize the growing seriousness of the problem, and acknowledge that we must be a part of the solution, so we welcome and commend the efforts of the UBCM and others to help address this complex issue. We are already participating with several partners on this issue for the development of a Regional Canada Goose Management Strategy for the CRD area. Recommendations resulting from this strategy will assist in developing effective management strategies to deal with these conflicts. Our ministries continue to support this project by providing technical advice and support on program materials, and attending meetings and field trips.

B43 GROUND WATER REGULATION & AGRICULTURAL WATER RESERVE

WHEREAS the intent of British Columbia's new Water Sustainability Act is to respond to current and future pressures on water and better manage a critical resource;

AND WHEREAS groundwater extraction is not currently regulated resulting in decline and reduced stream flow in critical areas;

AND WHEREAS creating agricultural water reserves will potentially improve the long-term security of water supply for ALR lands leading to increased agricultural production and food security:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that support for the principles of creating a groundwater regulation mechanism and agricultural water reserve system be conveyed to the provincial government.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment

Managing groundwater and securing access to water for agriculture and food security are two key initiatives of the proposed *Water Sustainability Act*.

Currently in British Columbia, groundwater is not regulated. Under the *Act* it is proposed that large groundwater users will be required to obtain a licence or approval. In areas where groundwater is potentially at risk, licensing requirements could extend to all groundwater users.

Also proposed in the *Act* will be the ability to reserve water for agriculture. Currently Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) lands can only be used for agricultural production – this can be difficult without secure access to water. Agricultural water reserves will protect the future water supply needs of ALR lands by maintaining water for agriculture.

B44 REGULATION OF SALE OF PLANTS & SEEDS

WHEREAS the continuing spread of invasive plant species across BC and Canada is significantly impacting much of our agricultural and environmental resources;

AND WHEREAS local governments are allocating resources to the control and eradication of invasive plant species at a substantial financial cost; however, invasive plants and seeds continue to be sold in nurseries, catalogues and via the Internet:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM lobby the provincial and federal governments to develop a strategy to prohibit the sale of invasive plant species and their seeds.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

The Inter-Ministry Invasive Species Working Group is reviewing legislation and policy and has identified areas such as the sale of invasive plant species and their seeds that require regulatory consideration. The ministry is committed to examining and proposing opportunities for improving the *Weed Control Act* and Regulation and has begun work on this initiative.

The provincial government continues to work collaboratively with the Invasive Plant Council of BC to raise awareness of the impacts and threat posed by the sale of invasive plants and their seeds through horticulture outlets. The result of this work has been increased awareness within the industry, voluntary removal of some non-regulated invasive species, and development and dissemination of the successful "Grow Me Instead" program.

B45 ENFORCEMENT OF DEVELOPMENT PERMITS

WHEREAS development permit violations are seen as being against the *Local Government Act* and not local government bylaws;

AND WHEREAS local governments do not have the authority to penalize property owners through ticketing or prosecution in provincial court for these development permit violations:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM lobby the provincial government to make changes to the *Local Government Act* to permit local governments to issue tickets and initiate prosecution through municipal ticketing processes to enforce the prohibitions in s. 920(1) and the requirement in s. 928 that land be developed strictly in accordance with the permit.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development

This concern has not been brought to the attention of the Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development (Ministry) before. This is a new interpretation of how the legislation governing the enforcement of development permit violations operates. Further information regarding this interpretation of the legislation could assist the Ministry in looking to this issue further.

Some local governments include development permit rules in the matters that can be enforced under their Municipal Ticket Information bylaw. This authorizes these local governments to ensure compliance with development permit requirements by issuing tickets and initiating prosecutions.

The Ministry will look into this issue further and will clarify if needed.

B46 AGGREGATE EXTRACTION

WHEREAS aggregates are an important resource for economic development;

AND WHEREAS aggregate extraction, processing and transportation can cause significant social and environmental impacts:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government cooperate with local governments, the extraction industry, and local citizens in developing and implementing regional plans that identify suitable and unsuitable sites for extraction;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Province provide financial support for completing regional plans and authority for local governments to implement them.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Energy and Mines

The Province is committed to working with local governments across B.C. to find solutions to issues related to aggregate extraction. Due to fiscal pressures, the Province is at this time unable to provide financial support for completing regional plans.

Gravel is an important resource that all communities need to build public infrastructure such as roads, hospitals and homes. Appropriate development of the resource is key to our way of life and the provincial economy.

B47 REGULATION & PROTECTION OF USE OF WATERWAYS

WHEREAS the safe, responsible and environmentally sensitive use of our inland waterways for recreational and other purposes is a high priority with many federal and provincial agencies having specific interests and roles in the regulation and protection of these valuable resources;

AND WHEREAS there is no single agency, comprehensive plan, nor adequate regulatory and enforcement framework to sufficiently ensure that these resources are effectively protected and managed for the long term benefit of all residents and users throughout BC:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request that the provincial government immediately take a leadership role and initiate an Inland Waterways Task Force, with stakeholder representation including, but not limited to:

- Provincial Ministry of Environment
- Provincial Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure
- Provincial Ministry of Health Services
- Provincial Ministry of Community Development
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada
- Integrated Land Management Bureau
- Transport Canada Office of Boating Safety
- RCMP
- Various local governments, including First Nations

to review the current recreational, environmental and water quality issues related to the safe, shared use of inland waterways and bring forward a comprehensive plan to better manage, regulate, and enforce the shared use of these valuable resources.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

Although the formation of a provincially led Inland Waterways Task Force is currently not feasible due to staffing and budget constraints, the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations (Ministry) continues to explore opportunities to integrate protection and regulatory activities across ministries. Should local governments choose to establish and lead such a task force, the Ministry would be pleased to participate.

Ministry officials have recently met with local representatives to address recreational, environmental and water quality concerns that would fall within the purview of the proposed task force. Recent studies have rated the water quality on Okanagan Lake very high, and a lakeshore mapping project on spawning habitat is assisting with protection and a recovery of the Kokanee population. In response to local complaints with respect to loud motorboats, Transport Canada now requires the use of mufflers on most motorized watercraft operating on inland waterways. Ministry staff are exploring enforcement options with their federal counterparts.

The Ministry remains committed to working closely with local governments and partner agencies in proactively managing issues of mutual interest and shared responsibility.

B48 AGRICULTURAL LAND COMMISSION

WHEREAS the BC Agricultural Land Commission has performed a singularly important role in preserving for agriculture the Province's limited agricultural land base;

AND WHEREAS the Agricultural Land Commission has experienced budget and resource cutbacks for several years such that the BC Auditor General has reported that the Agricultural Land Commission no longer has the resources required to fulfil its legislative mandate, and professional organizations such as the BC Association of Agrologists have expressed increasing concern about the ability of the Agricultural Land Commission to do its job of preserving BC agricultural land for agriculture:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM express its concern about the ability of the Agricultural Land Commission to achieve its mandate, and that resources to the Agricultural Land Commission be increased such that it is able to effectively carry out its mandate of preserving agricultural land for agriculture.

RESPONSE: Provincial Agricultural Land Commission

At the request of the Minister of Agriculture, during the Fall of 2010, the Chair of the Agricultural Land Commission conducted a thorough review of ALC operations, policy, regulation and legislation to ensure the ALC continues to effectively fulfill its mandate to support farm families and enhance the integrity and sustainability of agriculture in British Columbia.

The Chair's report "Review of the Agricultural Land Commission - Moving Forward: A Strategic Vision of the Agricultural Land Commission for Future Generations" was submitted to the Minister of Agriculture in November 2010.

The Province continues to be committed to the ALR and the protection of agricultural land to support farmers and farm families, and on November 14, 2011, government announced several initiatives aimed at improving the structure and sustainability of the ALC. Improvements to the ALC have been made in terms of transitional funding that provides the ALC with resources to transition to a more self-supporting operating model by 2013 and to improve information services and mapping. Legislative changes in place as of November 25, 2011 will discourage repeat applications to exclude agricultural land, enhance the ALC's enforcement capacity and encourage farming by allowing the ALC to focus on proactive land use planning with local governments rather than reacting to applications. Further details may be found at http://www.newsroom.gov.bc.ca/2011/11/province-strengthens-agricultural-land-commission.html and http://www.newsroom.gov.bc.ca/2011/11/changes-strengthening-agricultural-land-commission-now-law.html

B49 PROVINCIAL PARKS

WHEREAS provincial parks, their facilities and services provide recreation opportunities for all British Columbians and tourists travelling through our province, but the Province has failed to fund these parks, facilities and services adequately, resulting in widespread deferred maintenance, safety issues and limited accessibility throughout the BC Parks system;

AND WHEREAS the Province has invited local governments to assume a 'shared stewardship' role for provincial parks in general and through funding programs such as the Community Legacy Program, but many local governments across the province do not have the resources necessary to participate in the financing or operation of provincial parks, facilities or services:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM petition the provincial government to provide appropriate budgets and staff to fully support the continued and sustained operation of provincial parks and related facilities and services, thereby supporting the tourism industry and the quality of life of all British Columbians;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the provincial government be asked to recognise provincial parks and related facilities and services as the sole responsibility of the Province and cease all direct and indirect attempts to download these services, or any aspects of these services, to local government.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment

British Columbia has a world-class parks system. More than 14 per cent of British Columbia's total area is now protected – more than any other province in the country. It is second in size only to the Canadian National Parks system, and over the past decade it has continued to grow. For example, 1.9 million hectares have been added through the creation of 65 new parks, 144 conservancies, two ecological reserves, nine protected areas and the expansion of more than 60 parks and six ecological reserves. Today, the province has nearly 1,000 parks and protected areas.

The BC Parks' budget, like many, is unfortunately not immune to the global economic situation, and in 2011/12 the budget is reduced by approximately two per cent as government focuses resources on health care and education. This reduction was identified two years ago as part of government's three-year fiscal plan. However, the budget is still nearly $30 million, which allows the delivery of key services as well as maintenance and enhancement facilities in parks in every region of the province, thereby supporting the tourism industry for British Columbians. BC Parks spends $10.98 million in capital projects every year and maintains a network of facilities worth approximately $700 million.

BC Parks staff do a great job looking after provincial parks; there are about 20 million visitors each year, and the visitor satisfaction rate for BC Parks is 80 per cent. The camping reservation services are among the best in North America and provide exceptional outdoor recreation opportunities. In 2011 BC Parks celebrated the 100th anniversary of its first Provincial Park by launching a Community Legacy Program, directing $450,000 to community groups to upgrade facilities in local parks. In addition, BC Parks worked with partners and sponsors to engage British Columbians in Parks 100 celebrations all across the Province.

British Columbia's Provincial Parks and Protected Areas are the size of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and PEI combined. While performing maintenance on every trail or attending to every blown-down tree is not possible, BC Parks works to ensure that these very special places are accessible for British Columbians today and preserved for the park users of tomorrow.

B50 FORESTRY PRACTICES ON PRIVATE MANAGED FOREST LANDS

WHEREAS numerous large parcels of private managed forest land exist on Vancouver Island as a result of the E&N land grants dating back to 1884;

AND WHEREAS private managed forest land regulations are inferior to Crown land forest regulations with respect to protecting key environmental, watershed and community interests:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM petition the Province of BC to revise the *Private Managed Forest Land Act* and appurtenant regulations to improve forestry practices on private managed forestlands to a standard equivalent or better than Crown forest land regulations, thereby better protecting community interests.

Response: Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

In British Columbia, governance for environmental stewardship on private land is a multi-agency responsibility. The Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations is responsible for the *Private Managed Forest Land Act* that regulates forests practices on private land to ensure protection of key public values such as fish and wildlife habitat, soil conservation, drinking water protection and reforestation. Several other agencies also play a role, including the Ministry of Health, responsible for maintaining safe drinking water under the *Drinking Water Protection Act*; the Ministry of Environment, responsible for the protection of fish and wildlife under the *Wildlife Act*, the *Fisheries Act* and the *Environmental Management Act;* and Fisheries and Oceans Canada, responsible for fish habitat under the *Fisheries Act*.

The Private Managed Forest Land Council is responsible for establishing, administering, monitoring and amending regulations, with assistance from ministry staff and Legislative Counsel, relating to forest practices on private managed forest land. The Council is also responsible for monitoring forest practices and outcomes, the results of which help inform them about the effectiveness of regulations.

Based on the monitoring results received to date, government is satisfied that current standards are ensuring that the objectives for key environmental values as set out in the *Private Managed Forest Land Act* are being met. Government and the Council will continue to monitor results and look for ways to improve practices when necessary.

B51 FUNDING FOR VISITOR CENTRES

WHEREAS many local visitor centres in British Columbia are in need of a higher level of funding to maintain current levels of services to attract more visitors, which provides economic opportunities for local communities;

AND WHEREAS there is an inadequate level of provincial funding provided to visitor centres and local governments are unable to address this financial shortfall:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM petition the Province to increase the level of funding for the improvement and operation of effective visitor centres.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Innovation

The provincial government recognizes the importance of Visitor Centres in encouraging visitors to stay longer, spend more money and return to our province.

The overall budget for the Visitor Centre Network program in 2011 is $2.2 M which includes membership benefits such as access to trademarks, highway signage, training and materials, staff uniforms, online stats database and educational SharePoint site, as well as the fee for service. In addition, a Network conference is offered annually.

Of the $2.2 M, the annual fee for service has increased by 70% from 2001 to 2011 (less than $1 million in 2001 to nearly $1.7 million today) and is provided to recognize regional and provincial servicing.

It is up to a community to decide whether to operate a visitor centre, and the ministry does not provide those centres with operational or capital funding.

B52 AGRICULTURAL FUNDING

WHEREAS the success of agriculture depends on an investment in infrastructure, education and expertise by the provincial government through their Ministry of Agriculture and British Columbia is spending a mere 3.3% of Gross Domestic Product for supporting the agricultural industry, while the average in Canada is 16.4%:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government increase financial support for agriculture consistent with the national average.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Agriculture

British Columbia has an incredibly diverse agriculture industry and the type of support our industry needs cannot be compared to other provinces.

Within our budget, the Ministry of Agriculture is committed to supporting Business Risk Management programs, animal and food safety and affecting positive policy change. Agriculture is shared jurisdiction between the Province and Federal Government. The Ministry of Agriculture has leveraged provincial resources against those of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. The result is the Federal/Provincial Growing Forward agreement which provides an additional $550 million to British Columbia agriculture over the five years of the agreement. The current Growing Forward agreement ends in March 2013. Negotiations for an additional five-year agreement are currently underway.

B53 AGRICULTURE POLICY

WHEREAS food security is becoming a critical issue, and agriculture producers in British Columbia have faced numerous financial challenges including Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE), drought, loss of agricultural land for non-agricultural uses, and the loss of rangeland through forest fires, making it non-profitable to produce food locally;

AND WHEREAS other western provinces in Canada have developed and implemented comprehensive agriculture policies to assist local food producers financially in light of the challenges they face:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM lobby the Province of British Columbia to develop a comprehensive agriculture policy similar to those in Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Alberta which includes fair compensation to our food producers and that the federal and provincial governments work with food producers to assist them in accessing existing federal and provincial government programs designed to support food producers.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Agriculture

All of the provinces and territories in Canada have signed on to a multi-lateral five-year agreement with the federal government known as Growing Forward. Within this agreement, there is a suite of financial programs – known as Business Risk Management programs – that provide support to all farm families in Canada. The terms of, and access to, these programs is similar across Canada. The programs are: AgriInsurance (crop/production insurance), AgriStability (income stabilizing), AgriInvest and AgriRecovery (funds for recovery from natural disasters).

Funds for farm families impacted by flooding in the Delta area and for fires and drought in the Interior were secured recently through the AgriRecovery program.

These programs provide funds to farm families to help them manage a variety of risks that impact their businesses (weather, price and input cost fluctuations etc.).
British Columbia continues to contribute financially 40% of the funds in these programs. The federal government contributes financially 60%.

B54 CLEAN RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS

WHEREAS the Province of British Columbia is committed to ensuring that 90 percent of British Columbia's electricity generation comes from clean or renewable resources in purchasing new energy from Clean Renewable Energy Projects (CREPs);

AND WHEREAS the local region has an opportunity to derive long-term benefits from Clean Renewable Energy Projects:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the Province of British Columbia to include local governments as an equity partner to ensure that the local communities continue to share in the longer-term benefits of Clean Renewable Energy Projects in the Province of British Columbia.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Energy and Mines

The Province is not prepared to require local government equity in power projects, but encourages communities to investigate opportunities and partnerships in these projects. Local governments are already developing their own clean energy projects like the District of Lake Country's Eldorado Reservoir Hydroelectric project. Others are partnering on clean energy projects like the China Creek Hydroelectric Project [developed by the Hupacasath First Nation, Synex Energy, the Ucluelet First Nation and the City of Port Alberni (Upnit Power Limited Partnership)].

Clean, renewable energy projects, under development and in operation, contribute to local economic development across British Columbia providing direct and indirect jobs. Clean energy projects generate tax revenue for all levels of government. These projects help to fund vital social services such as health care and education and support families right across the province.

B55 BARRIERS TO SMALL SCALE FOOD PRODUCTION & DISTRIBUTION

WHEREAS foods grown/produced and distributed locally are much healthier and have a more positive impact on the environment;

AND WHEREAS it is fully understood that food safety is imperative; however, some of the provincial health regulations in place would be better-suited to large-scale commercial producers only, as they are not necessary or in some cases even possible for local small-scale producers, which impedes the growth of local food production and distribution rather than encouraging this positive industry:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM lobby the provincial government to encourage, support and enable small-scale food producers to provide foods locally without any unnecessary barriers, provided that food safety is not compromised;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the provincial government be encouraged to provide a public education component to recognize and support the distribution of local foods.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Agriculture

The British Columbia government is working to facilitate local food production while maintaining food safety.

Recently, the British Columbia Meat Inspection Regulations were amended to allow for licenses to accommodate meat processing plants that are deemed to be in remote locations and process small numbers of animals.

The Ministry of Agriculture, together with the Government of Canada, provides funds for British Columbia farmers and food processors to assist them to implement food safety systems in their operations. British Columbia food producers and processors receive assistance through educational materials (many of them translated into a variety of languages), workshops, funding to implement On-Farm Food Safety programs, internationally recognized Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point programs, and/or Good Manufacturing Practices.

The British Columbia government supports our Farmers' Markets and their ability to produce safe foods by developing the MarketSafe food safety training program. This training program which is offered through training workshops focuses on farmers and small scale food processors who wish to direct market their products.

The British Columbia Agriculture Council (BCAC), an agricultural umbrella organization, now has the licensing authority for the *Buy*BC logo. *Buy*BC licences participants to use marks including 'BC*grown*', 'BC*product*', 'BC*made*' along with room to customize the marks with approved descriptors like 'BC*chicken*' or BC*flowers*. The *Buy*BC program encourages promotions, product identification and road signs to help build consumer recognition of British Columbian products.

British Columbia Healthy Living Alliance supports the "Farm to School" program by the Public Health Association of British Columbia. This program seeks to connect schools with local farms with the objectives of serving healthy meals in school cafeterias, improving student nutrition, providing health and nutrition education opportunities, and supporting local farmers. To date, there are 26 Farm to School Programs in operation and 18 more are on the drawing board.

The British Columbia School Fruit and Vegetable Nutritional Program delivers two servings of fresh and ready to eat fruits or vegetables to schools every other week for 14 selected weeks in the school year. Fruits and vegetables provided are British Columbia grown when possible, and program participants gain knowledge of the health benefits of fruits and vegetables, the types of produce grown in British Columbia, and safe hand-washing practices. Over 1171 British Columbia public schools currently participate in the program. The British Columbia School Fruit and Vegetable Nutritional Program is a collaborative program from ACTNow BC with funding from the British Columbia Ministries of Health, Education and Agriculture. It is administered by the BC Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation, a non-profit association of educators to bring British Columbia's agriculture to students.

B56 SUPPORT OF THE BC GROWN & PROCESSED FOOD SECTOR

WHEREAS the agricultural and food sector is an important employer and vital component of the BC economy;

AND WHEREAS the agricultural and food sectors in other jurisdictions, that compete with farmers, ranchers and processors in BC, benefit from government investment in programs that promote and market locally grown and processed foods as well as support for agricultural extension services:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM call upon the Province to honour the commitment in the BC Agriculture Plan, "Growing a Healthy Future for BC Families", to invest $2 million annually in an industry-led marketing program that will increase public awareness and branding of BC grown and processed food; and in addition increase support for agricultural extension services by $500,000 annually as promised in the same plan.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Agriculture

The Ministry of Agriculture (Ministry) recognizes the benefits of increased promotion and marketing of local production, both to producers and the public. The BC Agriculture Council (BCAC) and the Ministry have extended the current *Buy*BC licensing agreement to 2015. In addition, the trademarks associated with this program have also been re-registered for another 15 years. The *Buy*BC licensing program forms the foundation of the branding program and clearly demonstrates government's commitment to this initiative. Ministry staff are currently reviewing options to re-instate this program.

While the MInistry has not been able to fund the branding program to the full extent anticipated in the Agriculture Plan, the Ministry has been able to provide funding for marketing and enhancement for certain sectors. In July 2010, the Ministry announced a $2 million investment, matched by a $3 million contribution from the Federal Government, for the development of new marketing opportunities and infrastructure, and to improve orchard pest management for the tree fruit industry. This funding will allow tree fruit growers to gain the innovative edge needed to promote British Columbian grown fruit.

The BCAC has indicated that they are looking forward to working with the tree fruit sector to assist them in promoting and branding their products. The Ministry will strongly support marketing initiatives such as this and will work with BCAC to broaden and enhance current buy local marketing programs.

The Ministry also supports and provides limited staff resources to industry associations that support local food including the BC Association of Farmers' Markets, Farm Direct Marketing Associations and the Small Scale Food Processors Association.

B57 FOREST TENURE REVIEW

WHEREAS BC communities rely on local forests to support their economic, social and environmental well-being, but there is widespread and growing public concern about the current and future health of BC forests and the adequacy of the future timber supply;

AND WHEREAS the current regulatory environment and mix of tenure arrangements does not allow for adequate community participation in decisions that affect local forests, especially in community watersheds:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM call on the provincial government to undertake a comprehensive review of the forest tenure system, aimed at developing a blueprint for reform that will:

- guarantee long-term environmental sustainability for our forests;
- allow for more community control in decisions about forest management; and
- ensure more of the benefits from developing forest resources stay in local communities.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

Government completed an extensive review of the BC Forest tenure system in March 2009. Specifically, the Working Round Table on Forestry was formed in March 2008. Its 19-member panel brought a diverse range of perspectives and experience to the task of providing key recommendations on how to ensure a strong and sustainable forest industry in BC.

The panel met with 19 communities and considered over 250 submissions from the public including forest companies, environmental groups, first nations, and communities. After one year of meetings and deliberations, they produced a consensus report articulating a vision and 29 key recommendations to "achieve a vibrant, sustainable, globally competitive forest industry that provides enormous benefits for current and future generations and for strong communities." Since then, government has worked continuously to implement these recommendations and has reported out its progress to the public in three separate status update reports dated– Sept 2009, January 2010, and January 2011. See link for more details: www.for.gov.bc.ca/mof/forestry_roundtable.

Specifically, recommendation #23 of the Working Round Table report recommends "the expansion of the Community Forest Agreement (CFA) program". To this end, the ministry is continuing its efforts in conjunction with the BC Community Forest Association and communities to expand the CFA program. To date, 30 CFAs have been issued with an Annual Allowable Cut of approximately 925,000 cubic metres per year covering just over 893,000 hectares. An additional 14 probationary community forest agreements have been issued and are currently transitioning to long-term CFAs.

A further 12 CFAs are in the invitation stage. The grand total of CFAs invited, issued or in transition is 56, with a combined AAC of close to 1.6 million cubic metres per year. See link for more details: www.for.gov.bc.ca/hth/timber-tenures/community/reports.htm.

With regard to expanding the size of existing CFAs to make them more economical, ministry staff are working with the BC Community Forest Association's board of directors to determine all the options to achieve this objective. It is envisioned that a suite of options can be applied to individual CFAs based on the local situation such as the availability of volume and land base. It is important to recognize that CFA expansion in many areas of the province will be limited due to declining harvest levels, the limited availability of suitable lands, government tenure commitments and initiatives such as the new First Nation Woodland licence.

B58 INSUFFICIENT FUNDING OF HEALTH AUTHORITIES

WHEREAS the provincial government has now created capital projects priority criteria that grants up to twenty bonus points to regional hospital boards that are prepared to fund up to 90% of capital projects costs;

AND WHEREAS such policies will create a two-tier medical facilities situation in British Columbia between those regional hospital boards that can afford to raise more capital via higher property taxes and those boards that cannot:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM register a strong protest with the provincial government, especially the Minister of Health, with regard to ongoing attempts by the provincial government to download its capital funding responsibilities, via insufficient funding of Health Authorities that burden property taxpayers, when they already pay for this capital funding via income taxes.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

The Ministry of Health and BC's six health authorities use a common capital project evaluation/scoring tool as part of the prioritization process for new capital projects.

Base criteria used to evaluate projects include urgency, improved patient access, safety, human resources and innovation.

In addition, there are two bonus point criteria recognizing that not all health authorities have Regional Health Districts' (RDH), and within health authorities, not all facilities are eligible for RHD capital cost sharing. The bonus point criteria consider operating cost benefits and additional funding partners (providing funding beyond the 40 percent level).

Since this evaluation tool is still in development, the Ministry does not use the bonus point criteria when considering which new capital projects to prioritize for capital funding. The decision to approve a project is ultimately based on the need of a project and that the project meets the base criteria within the strategies of the health authority and the Ministry.

RHDs throughout the province operate differently; some fund more than 40 per cent of a project's cost while others fund items that some other RHDs would consider outside the scope of their mandate.

RHD capital cost sharing is voluntary. In each case, the Ministry respects the decisions made by the regional hospital districts as they consider what's in the best interest of their region.

The Ministry does not make capital funding decisions based on how much additional non-provincial funding can be contributed to a project.

Since 2001, the Ministry has invested almost $7 billion in health capital projects in B.C. These investments in health care infrastructure benefit the health of all British Columbians, and help create thousands of jobs in communities around the province.

B59 RESTORE FUNDING TO HOSPITALS

WHEREAS provincial funding to properly equip and operate hospitals in British Columbia has been inadequate for a number of years;

AND WHEREAS this lack of funding causes unfair inequities from community to community, and leaves some hospital's without equipment and others with high levels of resources:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government be urged to properly fund construction, resourcing, equipping and staffing of hospitals in this province.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

Since 2001, government has invested almost $7 billion in capital improvements to expand, modernize and upgrade hospitals and health-care facilities right across B.C.

Over the next three years, British Columbia's health care system will benefit from investments such as new medical equipment and modernized health facilities as part of a $1.9-billion health sector capital plan.

To support health authorities in using health care dollars most efficiently and with maximum flexibility, the province implemented a multi-year capital budgeting system and a capital policy framework that encourages more innovative solutions to meeting capital needs (e.g., public private partnerships; residential care service agreements).

As there is not an unlimited supply of capital funding, health authorities and the Ministry must prioritize capital requests to ensure funds are directed to the facilities with the greatest need.

While all health facilities regularly require replacement of medical equipment, no health facility in British Columbia goes unequipped.

Ministry of Health funding to health authorities for the 2011/12 fiscal year will rise to over $9.6 billion – an increase of $4.0 billion since 2001. Health authorities continue to spend approximately 60 percent of their total annual expenditures in the acute care sector.

The Ministry continues to provide record levels of funding to the health care system, and by 2013/14 the health budget will have increased by more than 100 per cent since 2000/01. Total ministry spending will rise to a record $15.7 billion in 2011/12 compared to $8.3 billion in 2000/01. Total ministry spending is expected to rise to $16.8 billion by 2013/14– up $8.5 billion or an increase of more than 100 per cent since 2000/01. Even in tough economic times, we have honoured our commitment to protect health care with an additional $1.1 billion over the next two years.

B60 RURAL HEALTH CARE

WHEREAS the state of healthcare in small communities is being continually eroded with services being reduced and eliminated;

AND WHEREAS attracting doctors and medical professionals to practice in rural areas of BC continues to be an ongoing challenge in rural areas of the Province:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request that Northern Health work with universities and communities to encourage graduates of the medical programs to practice and stay in rural areas of British Columbia.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

Recruiting and retaining physicians in smaller, rural communities is a challenge across Canada. The British Columbia Government funds a comprehensive range of programs developed and directed by rural physicians, health authority, Ministry and BC Medical Association (BCMA) staff through the Joint Standing Committee on Rural Issues (JSC) to assist rural communities recruit and retain physicians in their communities.

The JSC has established a suite of programs designed to support rural physicians and enhance the attractiveness of practice in rural BC communities. These include:

- Rural Retention Program (RRP) to incent physicians to practice and live in rural BC communities;
- Isolation Allowance Fund (IAF) to recognize physicians who live in practice in small rural communities with no hospitals;
- Recruitment Incentive Fund (RIF) to attract physicians to move to rural BC communities;
- Recruitment Contingency Fund (RCF) to provide extra recruitment incentives for hard to recruit communities/situations;
- Northern and Isolation Travel Assistance Outreach Program (NITAOP) to provide itinerant physician services;
- Rural GP Locum Program (RGPLP) to provide vacation and education leave relief for rural GPs;
- Rural Specialist Locum Program (RSLP) to provide vacation and education leave relief for rural GPs;
- Rural Continuing Medical Education (RCME) to provide financial support to rural physicians in the maintenance and development of their professional skills;
- Rural Education Action Plan (REAP) targeted educational funding initiatives aimed at encouraging physicians to practice in rural BC communities;
- Rural Co-ordinating Centre of BC (RCCbc) – a forum for communication and professional development for rural BC physicians.

The JSC also helps sponsor a specialized recruiting agency - "Health Match BC" - to assist rural BC communities recruit physicians.
In July 2011 the JSC announced a new $10.7M program directed at supporting emergency room services in rural communities.

Experience has also shown that community specific initiatives can also have a strong influence on a physician's or other health care service professional's decision on where they want to live and practice. Communities are encouraged to collaborate with their health authority and with Health Match BC in developing and maintaining initiatives that help make their community an attractive place for physicians and other health care professionals to live and practice.

Government programs and initiatives, in combination with the hard work done by many stakeholders in the BC health care system, have yielded positive results. In 2009, the Society of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada reported BC as having one of the best supplies of rural physicians in the country. In BC there is one GP for 874 rural people - compared to the Canadian average of one GP for 1153 rural people.

In 2004, we invested $12 million to build a Northern Medical Program in B.C., part of our successful efforts to more than double the number of medical education seats from 128 in 2003/04 to 288 today. The Government of B.C. provides $20.4 million in annual funding to the Northern Medical Program to train physicians in Prince George. We are just seeing the first cohort of graduates begin practicing in B.C. – and 40% of those that have set up practice are currently practicing in Northern B.C. Through the UBC/ UNBC Northern Medical Program, as at June 2011, there were 13 graduates of the Class of 2008 who have completed their family practice residency program and have now embarked on their careers as practicing physicians. Of those, 5 (almost 40%) are currently practicing in northern BC communities.

B61 MENTAL HEALTH ILLNESS IMPACTS

WHEREAS many rural communities are suffering from diminished resources to adequately support citizens with mental health issues;

AND WHEREAS properly caring for those patients results in local police, ambulance or related health care providers spending time to transport those patients to receive care, which often takes hours away from the community and leaves those communities vulnerable:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM petition the provincial government to restore adequate support services for citizens with mental health illness in all communities, in order to relieve the stress on those agencies that now have shouldered the additional burden.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

The Ministry of Health (Ministry) spends over $1.3 billion annually to support services and programs for people with mental health and/or substance use problems. This equates to an increase of more than 52 percent over the 2000/01 total of $851.4 million.

The Ministry's strategic direction includes implementation of Integrated Primary and Community Care (IPCC). This goal is built around attachment to a family physician working with the health care team, as well as links to local community services to more effectively meet the needs of those with mental health and substance use problems. A number of activities support this strategic direction.

- The health authorities and the Ministry have partnered in implementing 31 Integrated Health Networks that provide multidisciplinary care for patients with complex chronic health care needs, including those with mental health problems. Members of these health care networks include a variable mixture of nurses, medical office assistants, dieticians, social workers, respiratory therapists, pharmacists, rehabilitator assistants, and case managers. Networks include local family physicians to provide for the more complex care needs of the identified patients.
- Improved access to primary care physicians for individuals with mental health and substance use problems:
    - In 2009/10 there were 4,683 family physicians who provided care to people with mental health and/or substance use problems, an increase from 4,362 in 2004/05;
    - Implementation of physicians' incentives to develop care plans for their patients with mental health problems; and
    - Development and implementation of training modules for physicians on youth and adult mental health and substance use; as of July 2011, 1,238 physicians have been trained.

- Shared Care approaches have been developed in many parts of the province wherein mental health clinicians provide support and consultation to general practitioners (GPs) to care for their patients with mental health problems. Shared care models allow GPs to manage cases of higher complexity than they would normally be comfortable handling and achieve better patient outcomes.
- Development of multidisciplinary, community and outreach-based services (e.g. Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) teams which work with people with severe mental illness directly in the community).
- Development of community beds for people with mental health problems are typically provided through three types of housing programs: community residential care, family care homes, and supported housing. The number of these beds has increased from 8,662 in March 2010, to 8,794 in September 2010.
- A variety of Health Literacy initiatives and programs such as Canadian Mental Health Association's Bounce Back program, are geared towards preventing the development of mental health problems for vulnerable populations across the province. There have been 10,600 physician referrals to Bounce Back since its launch in June 2008.

On November 1, 2010, the Ministry released *Healthy Minds, Healthy People: A 10-Year Plan to Address Mental Health and Substance Use in BC* (the Plan). The Plan, which can be found on the Ministry's website at www.health.gov.bc.ca/library/publications/year/2010/healthy_minds_healthy_people.pdf focuses on promoting positive mental health for all British Columbians, preventing potential mental health and substance use problems before they occur, and intervening earlier to address emerging problems. It advances a cross-governmental, multi-sector and multi-system approach, and places a strong emphasis on the needs of children and families.

What is exciting about this Plan is there are priorities and actions focused on people at all ages and targeted at where they live, play and work - from the prenatal stage when high risk expectant mothers need extra support in their home to seniors with mental illnesses in facilities who deserve high quality care at the end of their lives.

The Plan addresses the unique needs of specific groups of people within the population, and understands the needs of individuals change across their lifespan. It also recognizes the need for an integrated approach to both mental health and substance use, and acknowledges that access to appropriate treatment and supports increases the likelihood of recovery.

- Examples of key targets identified in the Plan that will enhance the quality of community-based care include:
  - Enhanced availability and capacity of community practitioners;
  - Focussing on evidence-based therapeutic interventions such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, and self management support programs;
  - Expanded, integrated use of tele-mental health services particularly geared towards enhanced access in rural communities; and
  - Implementation of community, evidence-based interventions, such as:

    - Early Psychosis Intervention: Provincial standards to provide earlier interventions for individuals having a first episode of psychosis.
- ACT: Provincial standards have been established including adaptations for rural communities to treat individuals with the most severe forms of mental illness in the community. Over the last three years, eight ACT teams have been established in BC.

B62 AUTISM PROGRAMS & FUNDING

WHEREAS autism is a life-long development disability which affects brain development and has been found throughout the world in families of all ethnic and social backgrounds;

AND WHEREAS intensive early intervention for young children with autism has been demonstrated as being extremely effective in helping them learn to communicate appropriately and to be included meaningfully in community events;

AND WHEREAS the provincial government in September 2009 cut its early intensive intervention program which only covered a minority of young children with autism;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government be encouraged to:

- Reinstate and fully fund early intensive therapy autism programs for all identified children whose parents request it;
- Increase funding for universal early screening and identification of infants and toddlers who are at risk for autism, and initiate very early intervention programs that teach parents to interact with and facilitate their child's development as soon as they are diagnosed;
- Increase educational funds that are targeted at supporting teachers to educate students with autism and other developmental disabilities, using the principles of Universal Design for Learning, positive behaviour support, and other evidence based educational strategies; and
- Increase funding for post-secondary vocational supports aimed at creating customized, community-based employment opportunities for all individuals with autism and other developmental disabilities.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

The British Columbia Autism Assessment Network (BCAAN) provides diagnostic and assessment services to children eighteen years and under. BCAAN has standards and guidelines to ensure consistent care across the province. Additionally, a systemic tracking of autism assessments and referrals has been developed by BCAAN.

The Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA) historically provided funding for approximately 1,100 assessments conducted throughout the province annually. Eligible referrals have risen steadily from approximately 400 in 2002/03 to 1,900 in 2010/11.

In 2011/12, PHSA increased the annual BCAAN operating budget by $1.296 million, to $4.696 million to fund 480 additional assessments per year for a total of 1,580. In July 2011, a new system developed by BCAAN for tracking of autism assessments and referrals was implemented. The system will improve effective streamlining of all referrals and shorten the wait time for assessment.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Children and Family Development

British Columbia is a national leader in autism supports and services for children and youth. The Province is investing more than $165 million in services for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Specifically, the budget for autism intervention and funding programs is more than ten times the 2001 budget of $4.1 million, totaling more than $42 million in 2011/2012.

For intervention services to children under 6 the province has shifted from contracted Early Intensive Behaviour Intervention programs, which were serving less than 10% of eligible children, in favour of a more equitable service model. As a result, rates were increased from $20,000 to $22,000 for over 900 families to access early autism intervention services across British Columbia. The Province has committed a minimum of $1 million annually toward the creation of a new Provincial Outreach Program(s) for young children with ASD. The program's goal is to improve access to high-quality, community-based intervention services and supports and enhance local opportunities for education, support, and training especially in rural and remote communities.

British Columbia is the only province in Canada that has a no waitlist policy for families to access autism funding once their child or youth has received a diagnosis of ASD.

The Province partners with the British Columbia Autism Assessment Network (BCAAN) to provide diagnostic and assessment services to children eighteen years and under.

Unique student supplementary funding to boards of education and independent schools for students identified with ASD was increased to $18,300 from $16,000 in 2010, a 14 percent increase. The per pupil allotment for all students, including students with ASD also increased from $5,851 to $6,740. This resulted in an overall increase for a student with ASD from $21,851 to $25,040.

The Province recommends the use of the Universal Design, positive behaviour support and other evidence-based interventions by school districts.

The Province is committed to supporting people with developmental disabilities to achieve their employment goals. In 2008, the province provided $1.1 million annually for three years for the Customized Employment Demonstration Project in which eight community-based service providers delivered customized employment services that assisted people with developmental disabilities to find and keep employment that is uniquely tailored to their individual needs.

The learning and best practices coming out of the Customized Employment Demonstration Project have subsequently expanded out to other service providers, who are now offering these services to a broader client group, including people with developmental disabilities and autism. The services are now offered through eleven community-based service providers managed by the ministry and funded by the Canada-BC Labour Market Agreement and the ministry's province-wide Employment Program for Persons with Disabilities. These services will continue to be offered until the new Employment Program of BC begins in April 2012.

B63 COMMUNITY-BASED SENIORS' CARE

WHEREAS access to community-based care for British Columbia's growing population of seniors is vital to keeping seniors healthy in their own homes and communities, and controlling cost pressures on the broader health care system;

AND WHEREAS BC's Ombudsperson is nearing completion of an investigation into systemic issues in seniors' care, and a number of independent reports and studies (including from the BC Medical Association and the UBC Centre for Health Services and Policy Research) document problems in timely access to appropriate care and inadequate coordination of services:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM urge the provincial government to significantly enhance BC's system of community-based seniors' care, in order to ensure timely access to the full range of public services that support seniors to age and die with dignity.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

The Ministry of Health (the Ministry) is committed to ensuring that people are able to receive the majority of their health services in community settings. To build a flexible, responsive and sustainable health care system to serve the needs of people with chronic health conditions, including seniors, it is important to work collaboratively within each community to ensure housing and health care options are appropriate to the needs of seniors.

The Ministry's strategic direction includes implementation of Integrated Primary and Community Care (IPCC). This goal is built around attachment to a family physician working with the health care team as well as links to local community services to more effectively meet the needs of British Columbians. IPCC will focus on high needs priority populations across the continuum of both service delivery and patient health status. This initiative is closely associated with the province's commitment that all British Columbians who choose to will have access to a family physician by 2015.

Over the past several years, the health authorities have expanded home health services by introducing many innovative care options, including quick response teams, ambulatory nursing clinics, home monitoring, and integrating health networks to better link primary care physicians with home health teams. The Ministry continues to work with the health authorities, the BC Medical Association and community groups to expand on this work.

Additionally, on February 1, 2010, the Government of BC introduced a more equitable rate structure to reduce the burden on low-income seniors and support ongoing improvements to the residential care system, ensuring residential care remains sustainable and accessible to all British Columbians. The health authorities are required to use the increased revenue raised to directly improve residential care, which may include: increased staffing levels for nursing and other health professional services, education for staff, investment in specialized services for distinct populations such as dementia and palliative care, and the amount of one-on-one care provided to clients. Each health authority will take a different approach to these investments based on prior investments and the unique issues in their region. However, all incremental revenue, estimated by health authorities at $78 million, is being invested to directly improve the care of clients within the residential care system.

BC's minimum room and board rates are among the lowest in Canada. Ministry funding to health authorities has increased steadily since 2001/02 and is reflected in health authority spending in home and community care from $1.57 billion (in 2001/02) to $2.4 billion in 2010/11, almost 54 percent. Last year alone health authorities increased spending for residential care by $45 million.

B64 INTRODUCTION OF UNIFORM PROVINCIAL SMOKING STANDARDS

WHEREAS tobacco use and exposure to second-hand smoke remains the single most preventable cause of disease and death in Canada, contributing to the deaths of approximately 6,000 British Columbians each year;

AND WHEREAS research indicates that reducing the places where people can smoke through legislation and regulation makes it more likely that they will not take up smoking, or that they will quit:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM recommend to the provincial government that a review of existing non-smoking bylaws be conducted with the purpose of considering amendments to the *Tobacco Control Act* and Regulation to introduce further uniform standards province-wide.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM recommend to the provincial government that a review of existing non-smoking bylaws be conducted with the purpose of considering amendments to the Tobacco Control Act and Regulation to increase the distance that smokers must be from windows, doors and air intakes from 3m to 7.5m.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

The Province of British Columbia is pleased to have strong support from local government tobacco control initiatives. Local governments have in many instances already exceeded the 3 metre buffer zone around doorways, windows and air intakes set by the *Tobacco Control Act*. The Province believes local governments have done and will continue to promote healthy living.

The Province is pleased to have strong support from local governments for tobacco control and healthy living initiatives. In fact, some local governments have already expanded the 3 metre buffer zone around doorways, windows and air intakes set by the Tobacco Control Act. UBCM indicates that local governments support increasing the buffer zone around doorways, windows and air intakes from 3 m to 7.5m. The Province will give regulatory changes serious consideration.

B.C. has a comprehensive strategy in place that includes programs to help prevent the uptake of tobacco by youth, help people quit using tobacco and strong legislation to protect the public from the dangers of second hand smoke. As of September 30, 2011, British Columbians have a choice of a 12 week supply of either free nicotine gum or patches or, if they are on Fair Pharmacare, coverage of prescription smoking cessation medication, a $24 million investment for better health.

B65 PROVINCIAL CHILDCARE FUNDING

WHEREAS the province of British Columbia has the highest level of child poverty in the country;

AND WHEREAS affordable quality childcare plays a central role in the economic and emotional health of families and children:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government significantly increase funding to childcare as part of a concerted effort to reduce child poverty and strengthen the economy of British Columbia.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Children and Family Development

No government wants to see any child or family living in poverty. Putting families first is a priority for this government and we are committed to helping empower families out of poverty.

British Columbia offers some of the most comprehensive, coordinated supports for low-income individuals and their families in Canada. These include subsidized housing, rental supplements, employment programs, child care subsidies, dental and optical care for children and programs for vulnerable seniors. We have also implemented a phased increase to minimum wage.

Since 2003, the child poverty rate in this province has dropped by almost 38%.

The BC government recognizes the importance of affordable quality child care to both the economy and to positive outcomes for children and families. That is why we continue to invest in our childcare system and have made early learning a priority.

The government of British Columbia will continue to develop and maintain new and existing child care spaces through direct support to providers with operating and capital funding. Since 2003/04 the number of child care spaces has increased by nearly 40 per cent, with over 99,000 licensed child care spaces receiving ongoing government funding. The province also assists low and moderate income families with the costs of child care. B.C.'s Child Care Subsidy Program provides $154 million in funding to support over 54,000 children.

Other early childhood learning and development programs that contribute to the health and well-being of children and families include the 316 StrongStart BC programs currently operating and the 10 additional programs opened in September 2011. As well, British Columbia implemented universal access to full day kindergarten for five year olds in September 2011.

B66 PROVINCIAL & FEDERAL INVESTMENT IN EARLY CARE & LEARNING

WHEREAS although access to early child care and learning is used globally as a key measure of the economic and social health of society, the current supply of child care in British Columbia only serves about 14% of children age 0 to 12, on the low end in Canada which in turn is lower than any other OECD country, and directly related to a lack of adequate investment by the provincial and federal government in early care and learning;

AND WHEREAS the 29% of children arriving to kindergarten in BC are developmentally vulnerable – the majority of which now come from the middle class – and are estimated by UBC's Human Early Learning project, in their report 15 by 15, A Comprehensive Policy Framework for Early Human Capital Investment in BC (Funded by the BC Business Council) to have negative and long term economic consequences estimated to be in the range of 20 per cent of foregone GDP growth:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request that other orders of government make early care and learning a top priority by:

- Creating strong legislative frameworks;
- Significant new public investments to support the legislative frameworks;
- Consolidating Early Care and Learning into the provincial Ministry of Education; and
- Establishing an accountability framework that includes developmentally appropriate play-based learning in the early years and ensures positive outcomes for children.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Education

Creating strong legislative frameworks

The Province is committed to supporting quality sustainable early child care and learning services to support parents to choose from a range of flexible programs in their communities. This includes looking for opportunities to be responsive to unique community and family needs through strong legislative frameworks that support the provision of child care and early learning opportunities for BC families. We will take this resolution under advisement as new policies and initiatives are developed.

Significant new public investments to support the legislative frameworks

The BC government invests approximately $608 million annually on early learning and childhood development initiatives, services and supports. This includes investments in child care amounting to more than $297 million. This government recognizes the importance of early child care and learning in promoting healthy child development and providing support to BC families, and will continue to support programs and services that benefit the children and families in this province. While government is not in a position at this time to make significant new public investments, we will take this resolution under advisement to support access and funding for child care.

Consolidating Early Care and Learning into the provincial Ministry of Education

We will take this suggestion under advisement, but government does not have plans at this time to re-align responsibility for child care.

Establishing an accountability framework that includes developmentally appropriate play-based learning in the early years and ensures positive outcomes for children

The Ministry of Education led the development of the *Early Learning Framework*, in partnership with the Ministry of Children and Family Development and Ministry of Health, through collaboration with the early childhood sector. This framework, which emphasizes developmentally appropriate play-based learning, now sets expectations for all programs for young children in the province.

B67 PROVINCIAL HOUSING TRUST FUNDS

WHEREAS leadership, sustained funding, and strong partnerships are required to increase the supply and diversity of affordable housing across British Columbia;

AND WHEREAS a provincial housing trust fund, similar to the Capital Regional District's Regional Housing Trust Fund model, is needed to create a stable base of financial resources for the Province to provide subsidized housing in partnership with the private sector and other orders of government;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM petition the Province to create Regional Housing Trust Funds from Property Transfer Tax revenues to provide subsidized, supportive and affordable housing for communities where affordable housing is not accessible for those with low incomes such as seniors, single parent families and people with disabilities;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the funds levied for this purpose be kept within the regions they are levied from and disbursement be contingent on financial or in-kind local contributions.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Finance

The Province currently provides funding to local governments through a variety of sources and programs (e.g. Traffic Fine Revenue Sharing, Towns for Tomorrow, Building Canada Fund, unconditional Small Community and Regional District Basic Grants).

Any proposed transfer of tax revenue to local governments must be evaluated in the context of the province's need to fund essential services.

Generally, tax revenues are dedicated to fund particular programs only in limited circumstances because tax revenues fluctuate in ways that do not necessarily match changes in the funding needs of programs. Dedicated taxes also constrain the government's ability to adjust spending priorities as circumstances change.

Since 2001, the Province has a strong record of investing in housing, and has built more than 14,000 new affordable housing units and another 4,176 are currently planned or under construction across BC. BC Housing is providing capital and operating costs to develop 32 supportive housing developments on city-owned sites. In addition, the Province has purchased 26 single-room occupancy hotels securing 1,550 rooms for people at risk of being homeless. Twenty-four of those hotels and approximately 1,400 of those rooms are located in Vancouver.

BC Housing works in partnership with municipalities across British Columbia to develop new housing options for individuals who are homeless or at risk. These partnerships entail a variety of municipal and non-profit contributions including free land, reduced or waived development permit fees and property tax exemptions, and expedited approvals processes. Housing trust funds have been established by local governments and regional districts and have been used as effective tools as part of the package of municipal contributions to provide housing for the province's most vulnerable. Examples include the housing trust funds established by the Capital Regional District, the City of Surrey and the City of Vancouver.

In 2011/12, BC's budget for social housing is approximately $521.6 million, more than four times as much as in 2001/02 ($124.5m).

B68 UTILITY RATE REVIEW

WHEREAS the current economic crisis has caused financial hardship for many taxpayers;

AND WHEREAS many local governments are making every effort to reduce expenditure and ease the tax burden on citizens by keeping increases at a minimum;

AND WHEREAS utilities are a significant cost item for residential owners and businesses;

AND WHEREAS Fortis has recently announced rate increases in excess of 11% per annum:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM call on the provincial government to review utility rate increases considered by the BCUC with a view to limiting the financial impact on consumers.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Energy and Mines

The review of BC Hydro did not extend to FortisBC and other investor-owned or municipal utilities as these are not Crown Corporations.

BC Hydro filed a revised three year rate application with the BC Utilities Commission on November 24, 2011 with the intention of reducing the rate increase BC Hydro had previously applied for by one-half.

This proposed rate reduction is designed to strike a balance between keeping rates down and affordable for BC families, but also letting BC Hydro invest in its future infrastructure needs for both families and businesses.

The BC Utilities Commission will review both BC Hydro's and FortisBC's applications to ensure that the applied for increases are appropriate and in the public interest.

B69 RETURN TO HERITAGE FUNDING

WHEREAS heritage generally throughout Canada is suffering due to the economic downturn, the loss of provincial government support in 2008 with the withdrawal of provincial funding for the Heritage Branch (Ministry of Tourism, Trade and Investment), Heritage BC, as well as community-based organizations throughout the province, means that community heritage resources are at risk for deterioration and loss;

AND WHEREAS heritage is an important asset for economic development in British Columbia as a draw for cultural tourism, one of the fastest growing segments of the tourism industry and the loss of heritage resources and the opportunity for people to experience the unique identity of communities in BC could further negatively impact on the local and provincial economy:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government adopt Heritage BC's "Call to Renew British Columbia's Heritage" initiative by:

- Adopting the Provincial Heritage Strategy, completed in 2009 but never implemented;
- Restoring the budget for the Heritage Branch, Ministry of Tourism, Trade and Investment;
- Resolving the heritage properties question, which includes issues related to provincially-owned heritage properties;
- Restoring community support through governmental initiatives including programming and gaming funds;
- Reinvesting in the Heritage Legacy Fund in order to support long-range heritage conservation work throughout the province.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

The Provincial Heritage Strategy aims to create a policy framework that will achieve the vision: *"British Columbia's historic places are honoured and shared, and their contribution to community identity, economic health, and environmental stewardship is fully realized by this and future generations."* This strategy focuses on the conservation of historic places. It is an important part of government's commitment to create a provincial strategy for heritage conservation and is designed to integrate heritage conservation into all areas of government's business related to historic places. Since the strategy requires the support of many areas of government, the Heritage Branch is currently completing a submission for Government's consideration.

In 2004, the Heritage Branch established the Community Heritage Planning Program (CHPP). Since then, the Community Heritage Planning staff increased from one to the current four team members who deliver outreach, advisory and training services to local

government, community groups and industry. Since 2004, the ministry responsible for heritage has invested
$30,000–$100,000 per year in public programs that support and honour BC's heritage, such as the BC Heritage Fairs Program, Heritage BC, and the Underwater Archaeological Society. In 2011/12, the Heritage Branch will be investing over $50,000 to support community heritage programs. Through the ministry responsible for tourism, the Province has invested between $70,000 and $120,000 annually in the Heritage Tourism Alliance of BC (HTA) since 2007. In 2011/12, the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Innovation will be investing over $70,000 in the HTA.

Agencies managing Provincial Heritage Properties received $8.1 million in operational funding for 2009–2012. In 2011/12, the ministry is risk-managing $1.5 million to keep the properties open to the public and address urgent deferred maintenance. The Province has approved $8.6 million over four years to upgrade sewer, fire and water infrastructure at Barkerville and Fort Steele.

Community heritage capacity building is a major aspect of the Heritage Branch's work. There are over 5000 locally recognized and protected historic places on the BC Register of Historic Places. Over 1700 appear on the Canadian Register of Historic Places. The Heritage Branch continues to support community heritage conservation through the provision of information, advice and training to local governments and community heritage organizations.

In 2003, the Province provided $5 million to the Vancouver Foundation for the Heritage Legacy Fund from which interest income is distributed through the Heritage Legacy Fund Society as grants for conservation and heritage awareness projects to local governments, First Nations, and non-profits organizations. This fund annually distributes approximately $250,000 to community projects across the province. The Heritage Legacy Fund of BC works in a complementary manner with the province; often historic places apply for and receive funding from the Heritage Legacy Fund after receiving advice and training from Heritage Branch staff. Earned interest on the Heritage Legacy Fund benefits publicly owned and non-profit owned historic places province-wide—an investment in BC's historic places that will be enjoyed year after year by children and families.

The ministry remains committed to the preservation of BC historic sites. Funding is available for physical conservation projects through the federal government, the provincially endowed Heritage Legacy Fund Society of British Columbia, BC Arts Council, and local funding programs. Gaming grants have been partially restored. Any proposal for additional heritage conservation funding must be considered in the context of government's need to fund essential services first during this time of economic challenges.

B71 AMENDMENT TO THE LIBRARY ACT TO ALLOW FOR REMUNERATION OF BOARD MEMBERS

WHEREAS the *Library Act* prohibits the payment of a per diem to library board members for attendance at library board meetings;

AND WHEREAS this results in local taxpayers being responsible for remuneration to elected representatives attending meetings that may not benefit those taxpayers:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province of BC amend the *Library Act* to allow for remuneration of a per diem to library board members for attendance at library board and library board committee meetings.

REPONSE: Ministry of Education

Today's Library Act is the result of extensive consultations with the public and with library stakeholders throughout the province, beginning with the publication of The New Approaches Ministerial Task Force on Public Libraries in 1988 and culminating in the 1993 White Paper for Public Review. Since the introduction of Bill 12, which became the Library ACI of today, the complexion of the province has changed and so too has the business of running a modem library. Technology has driven an even greater need for change recognized in the 2004 Public Library Services Branch Strategic Plan, Libraries Without Walls.

The provincial government remains open to considering the subject amendment along with other amendments identified from within government and from the larger library stakeholder community. The review of the Library Act is underway and ongoing and we are committed to ensuring BC's public library legislation remains relevant, useful, and productive.

B70 RESTORE GAMING GRANTS

WHEREAS non-profit organizations provide valuable services to citizens residing in municipalities throughout BC and most of these organizations rely on funding from all 3 levels of government;

AND WHEREAS most of these organizations have lost significant operating funds due to cuts and changes to the Community Gaming Grant program resulting in additional funding demands at the local government level:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that non-restricted funding from the Province's general revenues be restored immediately to non-profit organizations at least at the level (adjusted for inflation) provided in 2008-2009;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the eligibility criteria for Community Gaming Grants be reviewed and revised so that funding to non-profit organizations will be accessible at, and restored to, 2008-2009 levels.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community Sport and Cultural Development

In response to the concerns raised by changes to gaming criteria and funding, Mr. Skip Triplett was appointed to lead a review into Community Gaming Grants. The Review visited 14 communities in person, and conducted 5 video and teleconferences during August and September to gather input from individuals and non-profit organizations through a series of Community Forums.

The Terms of Reference of the Community Gaming Grant Review was to:

- review legislation that governs community gaming grant funding;
- review and provide funding formula options;
- review criteria/eligibility for organizations applying for community gaming;
- review and provide options regarding the processes involved with applying for and receiving community gaming grants;
- review and provide options for a multi-year funding model; and
- review and provide options for the future role of government in managing community gaming grants

Mr. Triplett's final report with options was submitted to the Minister of Community, Sport and Cultural Development on October 31, 2011 for consideration and review. The Province announced on Jan. 11, 2012 that it would be implementing a number of changes to the allocation of community gaming grants, including:

- Increasing gaming grant funding by $15 million in the government's base budget, beginning this fiscal year and going forward.
- Reinstating funding eligibility for environmental, animal welfare and adult arts and sports groups, with an immediate application intake to ensure those groups are funded this fiscal year.
- Increasing funding to groups that have experienced grant reductions during the past three years.
- Exploring options for implementing a multi-year funding program that will offer groups more certainty and streamline the application process.

B72 HIGH SPEED INTERNET/CELL PHONE COVERAGE

WHEREAS access to high speed internet and cell phone coverage has been an ongoing promise to residents of Canada from various levels of government;

AND WHEREAS many rural areas in Canada still do not have access to these services, which deters people from moving to these areas, adversely impacting economic development and business opportunities in rural BC and rural Canada:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM strongly encourage the provincial and federal governments to move quickly toward ensuring the availability of high speed internet and cell phone service to every Canadian community.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Labour, Citizens' Services and Open Government

The Government of British Columbia has leveraged the Province's telecommunications buying power to improve high speed Internet connectivity in rural and remote communities and to expand cellular services along provincial highway segments.

On July 29, 2011, the Province signed a new agreement with TELUS that will provide over 1,700 kilometers of new cellular coverage along unconnected highway segments within the next five years, a vital step for public safely. In addition, Internet connections to designated rural and remote communities will be improved by increasing bandwidth up to ten times the current speed, enabling broader access for rural families and businesses.

The Province's goal is to see every community in British Columbia connected with high speed Internet in the next 10 years, and will work with the private sector and other levels of government to make this happen.

The Province continues to take every opportunity to represent the interests of rural British Columbians by participating in federal telecommunication consultations. The Province advocates for providers to increase service in rural areas and urges the federal government to consult with provinces and municipalities before it makes reforms to existing telecommunications policies.

B73 EDUCATION CURRICULUM ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

WHEREAS it is desirable to increase the level of interest and participation in local government by young people in the community:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government significantly increase and improve the educational curriculum related to local government.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Education

BC's school system is designed to enable all learners to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes they need to become active participants in their communities and in society.

More specifically, the Social Studies curriculum aims to develop thoughtful and responsible citizens who understand and exercise their roles, rights and responsibilities in society. Social Studies is mandatory for all students from Kindergarten to Grade 10. BC students must also fulfill a social studies 11 requirement to graduate, choosing from among Civic Studies 11, BC First Nations Studies 12 or Social Studies 11.

Students start learning as early as Grade 3 about local governance structures and by Grade 5, study government processes such as elections. Both Social Studies 10 and 11 and Civic Studies 11 include specific learning outcomes about the structure and function of government in Canada and the different powers and responsibilities of different levels of government. For example, Civic Studies 11 contains learning outcomes in which students are expected to:

- Describe the division of powers in Canada among federal, provincial, territorial, First Nations, and municipal governments;
- Describe Canada's electoral systems and processes; and
- Evaluate the citizen's role in civic processes locally, provincially, nationally, and internationally.

There are also many resources and initiatives intended to encourage both young people and adults to participate in the democratic process. Elections BC, for example, has developed two education kits to introduce youth to the importance of active participation in the provincial electoral process. The kits have been designed to support the prescribed learning outcomes of the provincial Social Studies curriculum.

Finally, while students may learn about civics in the classroom, this does not guarantee that they will vote once they are eligible. Local government officials may wish to consider working with schools in their community to develop a local civics education program. Through activities like visiting schools or inviting students to attend local government meetings, local governments can engage directly with the students in their community and leave the students with a deeper understanding of what their local government does and why they should get involved in local politics.

B74 RESTORE FUNDING TO WOMEN'S CENTRES

WHEREAS women's resource centres play a vital role in communities through a range of services provided in support of women and children residing in municipalities throughout BC;

AND WHEREAS through cuts to community social services in 2004, women's resource centres have lost provincial funding used to support their operations and services thereby making it more difficult to receive other funding;

AND WHEREAS the lack of core funding has resulted in the closure of women's resource centres across BC, greatly impacting women, families and municipalities throughout BC;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province reinstate operational funding to all women's resource centres in BC.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health and Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

Government's priority is Families First. The Province has reallocated $68.7-million to support the implementation of Healthy Families BC. This strategy supports improving the health of BC families and communities by increasing opportunities for families to make healthier choices in a variety of settings that include home, community and workplace. Women play a pivotal role in the overall health of families and will benefit from the implementation of the Healthy Families BC strategy including the Healthy Start Initiative.

The Healthy Start initiative enhances public health prenatal and child health prevention services and at the same time, focuses pregnancy and parenting support on women, children and their families who would benefit the most from intensive follow up. It includes public health prenatal and child health services to support all women, children and their families with ongoing or episodic care needs. The Nurse Family Partnership program provides additional support for the most vulnerable clients – young, first time, low income women and their children from pregnancy through two years of age.

The Ministry of Health supports the Womens Health Strategy "Advancing the Health of Girls and Women". This strategy presents a 10 year vision for improving the health of all girls and women in the province through developing better information on their health status, fostering gender-sensitive health care and ensuring attention to health promotion and disease prevention in addition to medical treatment for illness. It is a guide to support provincial, regional and local efforts by defining a province wide perspective on women's health for policy development, a networking tool, and an evidence based document supporting women centred care.

The Province remains committed to enhancing women's safety and ensuring that women who have experienced violence receive effective supports. Each year, the Province provides over $70 million in funding to support victims of crime including women and children who have been impacted by violence. This includes $12.494 million for victim service programs, $16.448 million for violence against women counselling and outreach programs, $12.343 for the Crime Victim Assistance Program and $32 million for transition house services (including safe homes and second-stage housing). As a result, 95% of women in B.C. have access to services within an hour of their home. The Province also funds the Community Coordination for Women's Safety program, which provides assistance to BC communities to develop or improve models of cross-sector coordination on violence against women issues.

The Province recently completed a comprehensive Domestic Violence Action Plan focused on enhancing and integrating the response to domestic violence by justice and child welfare system partners. Key components of the Action Plan included a BC Coroners Service Death Review Panel, the establishment of a new Domestic Violence Unit in the Capital Region, updating the provincial Violence Against Women in Relationships Policy, and developing a public website on domestic violence available at www.domesticviolencebc.ca.

B75 HOMICIDE INVESTIGATION COSTS

WHEREAS the *Police Act* makes municipalities responsible for the investigation of homicides in British Columbia based on the jurisdiction in which a victim's body is discovered;

AND WHEREAS the increasing average cost for investigating a homicide could have a major impact to local tax payers in most small and mid-sized communities;

AND WHEREAS equal treatment of homicide investigations should not be impaired by the ability of any given municipality to pay for the investigation costs:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM petition the Province to amend the *Police Act* such that the costs of homicide investigations are borne by the Province and not by the municipal tax payers.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

Under the *Police Act* the Solicitor General requires that an adequate and effective level of policing is maintained to ensure public safety. Municipalities are specifically required to provide policing with a police force of sufficient strength to enforce the laws and maintain law and order. Municipalities are expected to prevent, to respond and solve all crime issues within their communities; this includes homicide investigations.

Policing is dynamic, not static, and from time to time all levels of government incur extraordinary expenditures over and above their established police budgets in order to adequately deal with crimes in their communities. There are extraordinary cases where it is unreasonable to expect municipalities to pay these costs.

In the past, the provincial force has assisted municipalities with major investigations. However, municipal governments still have an obligation to pay a share of the costs in these extraordinary cases that occur within their policing jurisdiction. There are other examples where the RCMP enter into cost sharing arrangements with municipalities on major projects and investigations. In the Lower Mainland, municipalities have integrated specialized units to serve multiple jurisdictions and share the costs across those jurisdictions. The Province recognizes that areas outside of the urban core currently do not have the benefit of specialized integrated teams to provide the level of expertise required by some investigations and the ability to share the costs of these investigations. The Province continues to work with the RCMP on integration initiatives to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of policing.

The Province provides significant funding for initiatives that benefit all municipalities and police agencies, such as DNA analysis and the implementation of PRIME. There are also a number of specialized units that the Province subsidizes or funds directly that would otherwise be paid for by municipalities, such as the Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit that combats organized crime.

B76 REDUCTION OF SHERIFFS' ESCORT FOR PRISONERS

WHEREAS the BC Sheriff Service has reduced the number of provincial prisoner escorts from northeastern communities from twice a week to once a week, due to manpower resource issues in Northeast BC;

AND WHEREAS this service reduction has resulted in provincial prisoners staying in local RCMP detachments for up to one week, thereby increasing the operating cost for these detachments, which do not receive full reimbursement of the expenses incurred to house these prisoners:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request that the Province of BC reinstate the sheriff provincial prisoner escort service in BC to previous levels to alleviate the increased housing expense that the RCMP detachments are incurring.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Attorney General

The Ministry of Attorney General appreciates UBCM raising the issue of the frequency of sheriff escort runs in the northeastern communities.

Currently, in all northern communities, there is one weekly escort run to depopulate RCMP cells of in-custody persons requiring escort to provincial correctional and other holding facilities. In the northeastern communities, the frequency of escort runs was reduced from two runs per week to one run several years ago. This change was made in order that limited staffing resources could be redeployed to perform court security duties in the local courthouses.

As UBCM is aware, these are challenging economic times and all areas of the provincial government are affected, including Sheriff Services. All Ministries are expected to stay within their allotted budget and Sheriff Services, as part of the Ministry of Attorney General, is no exception.

B77 PROVINCIAL LEGISLATION REGARDING METAL THEFT

WHEREAS local governments consider it necessary to regulate the business of buying and selling used and second-hand goods and scrap metal;

AND WHEREAS local governments and police recognize the need for provincial legislation regarding metal theft, including a daily electronic recording and reporting information system, such as the Xtract system used in the City of Vancouver:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM advocate on behalf of members to the provincial government to create a provincial regulation governing pawnshops, second-hand dealers and recyclers.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

The Province recognizes that metal theft has grown to be a significant public safety concern in communities across British Columbia.

In response to calls for Provincial Government leadership on the issue, British Columbia passed in November 2011 legislation to combat scrap metal theft by regulating the scrap metal and recycling industry. This will involve the creation of sales transaction and recordkeeping requirements; a provincial registry of metal dealers and recyclers; and penalties for non-compliance.

The Province is continuing to work towards an integrated solution that is operationally sound and that builds on the achievements made by local governments, industry and police in combating metal theft.

B78 NATIONAL PUBLIC SAFETY BROADBAND NETWORK

WHEREAS the health, safety, security and prosperity of Canadian citizens and public safety responders (including police officers, firefighters, and paramedics, and other responders) depends upon effective communications between public safety agencies;

AND WHEREAS Industry Canada public consultations on the use of the 700 MHz band by commercial mobile services (in anticipation of the August 30, 2011 transition from analog television to digital that will free up spectrum for potential use by public safety) provides the opportunity to state public safety spectrum needs;

AND WHEREAS dedicated spectrum will be a key enabler of the Government of Canada's Communications Interoperability Strategy for Canada's vision of a national public safety communications system based on common user requirements and open standards and a system of systems approach:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Government of Canada recognize the importance of the 700 MHZ spectrum and set aside dedicated public safety broadband, and that the Government of Canada and the Province of British Columbia commit the necessary resources to provide vision and leadership as required to build a robust system that meets public safety's mission critical requirements to accomplish communications interoperability between public safety agencies across Canada and across borders.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

The Province supports efforts to secure dedicated 700 MHz spectrum for public safety broadband, including strongly opposing any potential Industry Canada commercial auction of that portion of the spectrum. We believe that the use of broadband technology is crucial to the future of public safety here and across Canada. As an active member in the national Canadian Interoperability Technology Interest Group (CITIG) we are working to improve Canadian public safety communications interoperability.

The ability of emergency responders and other public safety agencies to communicate effectively, share information and coordinate their operations is crucial to efficient and effective emergency response. Common communication standards, policies, technology and practices are the keys to this ability. As an example, the Province is working with local authorities as part of the Integrated Partnership for Regional Emergency Management (IPREM) in Metro Vancouver to launch a regional emergency communications strategy and governance development project.

B79 FUNDING FOR COASTAL FLOOD PROTECTION

WHEREAS coastal flood protection works are deficient in many areas along BC's coastline;

AND WHEREAS climate change is increasing the risk of flooding in many coastal communities due to long term sea level rise and increasing storm intensity;

AND WHEREAS the provincial government has identified climate change adaptation as a key priority in the coming decades:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government work towards developing a funding program to assist local governments with climate change adaptation for coastal communities as it relates to coastal flood protection.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

Climate change will cause sea levels along the BC coast to continue to rise by approximately one metre by 2100. The long-term implications of this for coastal flood protection and land use require that planning for increases in flood risk begin now.

The recent provincial publication of proposed "Climate Change Adaptation Guidelines for Sea Dikes and Coastal Flood Hazard Land Use" is a first step in managing these impacts and providing a basis for discussion. The province will consult further with coastal communities and other stakeholders to develop policies that will update guidelines for sea dike design and coastal land use planning.

UBCM has requested that the provincial government work towards developing a funding program to assist local governments with climate change adaptation for coastal communities as it relates to coastal flood protection. The province agrees that the financial implications for coastal communities must be identified and is initiating a project to estimate the costs of strengthening sea dikes and other adaptation strategies. Once the costs and benefits are better understood, all levels of government will need to discuss and develop a range of funding options.

Historically, flood protection programs in British Columbia have been cost-shared by federal, provincial and local governments. This cost sharing is consistent with other infrastructure projects and also with public safety as a shared responsibility. Cost sharing maximizes the funds available to assist communities across British Columbia with flood protection initiatives.

The province is committed to working with the UBCM and local governments in developing policies and strategies for improving coastal land use management and flood protection.

B80 WILDLAND INTERFACE HAZARDS ON CROWN LAND

WHEREAS the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations and its regulations govern the activities of forest and range licensees in BC;

AND WHEREAS it has been identified that 685,000 hectares in British Columbia are considered at high risk of an interface fire;

AND WHEREAS some funding is available through the Community Wildfire Protection Plan program to mitigate risk from wildfire in communities and surrounding Crown lands;

AND WHEREAS local governments, in particular, regional districts which have large geographical areas and highly dispersed residences are unable to contribute their portion of funding (dollars or in-kind), in order to access program funding, nor do they have the capacity or legislative authority to manage Crown land interface areas:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM lobby the provincial government, through the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations, to utilize its existing capacity within BC Timber Sales to have pine beetle infestation areas harvested in those interface areas wherein licensees have determined that they will not be harvesting in order to abate wildland interface hazards on Crown land.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

With contributions from the federal government, the Province has provided $62 million since 2004 to help local governments prepare community wildfire protection plans and complete on-the-ground work to reduce the interface wildfire risk.

There is no requirement for local governments to treat Crown land; however, communities have the flexibility to include sections of abutting Crown property if they would like to have it treated as part of their community wildfire protection plan. Funding for these projects is provided under the Strategic Wildfire Prevention Initiative, based on cost-sharing formulas that recognize local governments' in-kind donations. When they are not fighting wildfires, Wildfire Branch suppression crews will also conduct fuel treatments on Crown lands to support community wildfire prevention.

BC Timber Sales (BCTS) was established with a mandate to provide the cost and price benchmarks for timber harvested from public land in British Columbia. While BCTS may conduct harvests in some of the affected areas adjacent to communities to seek benchmarks, it is beyond their mandate to harvest all stands adjacent to communities.

The Province agrees that it is vital that all communities, regardless of location, undergo the Community Wildfire Protection Plan process and complete the identified fire management activities and fuel reduction treatments, particularly where beetle infestations have increased the risk.

The ministry is aware of the concerns about fuel treatments on Crown Lands adjacent to communities. The Strategic Wildfire Prevention Initiative, composed of UBCM, the First Nations Emergency Services Society and staff from Wildfire Branch, continues to assess funding and treatment options for Crown lands adjacent to communities.

B81 WINTER TIRES MANDATORY FOR RENTAL VEHICLES

WHEREAS winters in northern BC are subject to icy road conditions and snowfall accumulation;

AND WHEREAS many visitors to communities in northern BC rent vehicles for transportation;

AND WHEREAS these rental vehicles traditionally have all season tires rather than winter tires:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the Province of BC to make it mandatory that winter rated tires be installed on rental vehicles during the winter months in those areas of BC that experience snow and ice conditions.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

The *Motor Vehicle Act* requires vehicles to be equipped with winter tires or chains when directed by a sign or public notice. Signs are posted on roads or in advance of highway routes throughout the province where adverse snow conditions can reasonably be expected during winter; typically from October 1 – April 30. Drivers must comply with the Act, and they bear the responsibility for ensuring the vehicle they are driving is appropriate for their intended use.

The Ministry fully endorses the use of winter tires when appropriate, based on road and weather conditions across the province, and has worked with the Automotive Retailer Association and car rental agencies to encourage education and adoption of winter tires for rental vehicles. Most rental agencies now offer vehicles equipped with winter tires for a nominal daily fee.

The Ministry has also worked with safety partners to develop educational campaigns such as "Shift into Winter," to promote awareness about safe winter driving equipment and practices.

While the Ministry is not considering further regulations surrounding the use of winter tires at this time, staff will work with stakeholders and communities to promote expanded use of winter tires, expand signage requiring use of winter tires or chains where appropriate, and continue to improve winter driving awareness education.

B82 RAIL CROSSING UPGRADE COSTS

WHEREAS rail lines previously under BC Rail control are now controlled by CN Rail, and thus now come under Transport Canada jurisdiction;

AND WHEREAS federal regulations do not specify a cost sharing formula that fairly distributes the financial responsibility for safety upgrades ordered by Transport Canada;

AND WHEREAS CN Rail management takes the position that 100% of crossing upgrade costs should be borne by the road authority (local government):

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM lobby the provincial government, as owners of the rail lines utilized by CN Rail, to prevent the downloading of rail line crossing upgrade costs to local governments.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

Transport Canada advised the District of Taylor, CN Rail and the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (Ministry) in August 2010 that three crossings (one under Ministry administration, two under Taylor administration) were unsafe and upgrading was necessary to meet federal standards. CN Rail estimated upgrades would cost $500,000. Taylor advised there were no municipal funds available for upgrades, and was of the opinion that CN should fully fund upgrade costs. Transport Canada advised Taylor that Transport Canada has the power to require cost sharing at its discretion, and clarified that the upgrades were related to signals only with Taylor's contribution being $50,000. This is not correct as Transport Canada has no authority to specify cost sharing. This authority resides with the Canadian Transportation Agency to hear costing disputes and specify cost sharing.

Historically costs of safety projects at existing railway crossings were shared 62.5% road authority and 37.5% railway after Federal grants. CN Rail made application June 10, 2011, to Transport Canada for an 80% grant. Should the grant be provided, which will cover $400,000 of the $500,000 estimated upgrade costs, the road authorities (Ministry and local governments) will still be responsible for 62.5% of $100,000, or $62,500. CN Rail will be responsible for 37.5%, or $37,500. The Ministry is making efforts to mitigate the cost exposure to Taylor.

The three railway grade crossings fall under federal jurisdiction as CN Rail, under the BC Rail Partnership Agreement, is the operator of the rail line.

Local governments are encouraged to make known their concerns respecting cost sharing with the Canadian Transportation Agency.

B83 HIGHWAYS – LIABILITY

WHEREAS the Province is solely responsible for the planning, construction, maintenance and signing of all provincial highways;

AND WHEREAS municipalities currently can be enjoined in a legal action concerning a provincial highway through a third party notice;

AND WHEREAS municipalities and the Municipal Insurance Association of BC can spend significant amounts of money to be removed from the legal action:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM petition the Province on behalf of BC local governments to amend the Negligence Act so that municipalities cannot be enjoined as third parties for legal claims on provincial highways.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Attorney General

The Ministry of Attorney General appreciates UBCM raising the issue of highways liability.

The Ministry will do further policy and legal analysis on this issue in order to determine what the implications would be of implementing this resolution.

The UBCM has previously raised issues about the *Negligence Act* focused on other amendments to eliminate the system of joint and several liability and replace it with proportionate liability, under which defendants are responsible only to the degree to which they contributed to the loss. This issue may be considered as part of an analysis of those other proposed amendments.

B84 INTERSECTION SAFETY CAMERAS ALONG HIGHWAYS

WHEREAS intersection safety cameras have the potential to significantly reduce the frequency and severity of crashes at highway intersections regardless of pavement markings;

AND WHEREAS current Insurance Corporation of British Columbia (ICBC) policies do not allow for the installation of intersection safety cameras on approaches without marked crosswalks, such as the intersection of Highway 17 and Ladner Trunk Road in Delta:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM work with the Province and ICBC to interpret and apply the current legislation to allow for intersection safety cameras to be installed at crash-prone locations where marked crosswalks are absent.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

The legislation enabling intersection safety cameras (ISCs) in British Columbia defines the start of the intersection as the first line of the crosswalk on the near side of the intersection. Without a crosswalk, there is no way to clearly show in a photo that a vehicle entered the intersection after the light had turned red. This evidence is needed to support the ticket issued by the intersection safety camera in court. The position of stop bars is not indicative of the start of an intersection for the purposes of the ticket.

ISCs are just one tool among many to deal with traffic safety. Other interventions, such as traditional enforcement or road engineering improvements, can be just as effective. ICBC is willing to work with municipalities, the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, police and other partners to find appropriate solutions to intersection safety.

B86 OUTSTANDING TAXES ON DEFAULTED CROWN LEASES

WHEREAS the Province, through leases, is the landlord for many properties within local government boundaries;

AND WHEREAS improvements on leased land enjoy municipal services and are subject to municipal taxation, but Section 257(6) of the *Community Charter* requires a local government to cancel the outstanding taxes on a defaulted lease:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM urge the Province to amend Section 257(6) of the *Community Charter* so that local governments can collect the outstanding taxes owing;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, should a Crown lessee default upon its local taxes, the Province will compensate the local government for this loss of revenue.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development

The Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development appreciates the difficulties that some municipalities experience when trying to collect unpaid taxes on leased Crown land. While section 257(1) of the *Community Charter* prohibits the use of tax sale as a remedy, there are other mechanisms available that can be used to recover outstanding taxes. Section 252 of the *Community Charter*, Recovery of Taxes by the Legal Remedy of Distress, allows for a collector to levy the amount of taxes due by distress. Recovery of taxes by distress can be used to collect on outstanding taxes before they become delinquent which provides a municipality an opportunity to collect before the lease is cancelled by the Province which consequently forces the taxes to be written off under section 257(6).

B88 SCHOOL SITE ACQUISITION CHARGE

WHEREAS a School Site Acquisition Charge under the *Local Government Act* "is imposed under subsection (1) for the purpose of providing funds to assist boards of education to pay the capital costs of meeting eligible school site requirements" in growing school districts;

AND WHEREAS Boards of Education provide education facilities to aboriginal and non-aboriginal residents residing on First Nation lands yet land developments on First Nation lands are not subject to the School Site Acquisition Charge therefore creating an unequal playing field:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM lobby the Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development and the Ministry of Education to establish a fair and equitable provincial system to collect funding for School Site Acquisition Charges or equivalent charges from new developments on First Nation lands should local Boards of Education impose this charge on neighbouring municipalities.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Education

The Province does not have the authority to establish a system for the collection of School Site Acquisition Charges from new residential developments on First Nation lands in situations where a board of education has implemented School Site Acquisition Charges for its school district.

The Constitution of Canada and case law provide that First Nations lands cannot be subjected to provincial or local government laws related to development cost charges and other similar charges, such as School Site Acquisition Charges.

B89 ILLEGAL DUMPING

WHEREAS illegal waste disposal is detrimental to the environment and our communities;

AND WHEREAS local governments are being called on to expend greater resources in order to monitor and clean up illegal dump sites:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Ministry of Environment be requested to make additional financial and human resources available to assist with enforcement, monitoring and clean up of illegal dump sites on Crown land.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

Illegal dumping on Crown land is an ongoing problem that will continue to require cooperation and coordination between provincial agencies, municipalities and regional districts. The Ministry of Environment can and does enforce action where illegal dumping results in pollution. The Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations is responsible for the management of Crown land assets and will continue to penalize illegal use of Crown land. Municipalities and regional districts, through authorization of solid waste management plans under the *Environmental Management Act* manage municipal solid waste and as such play a key role in preventing illegal dumping through the provision of recycling and waste disposal options for citizens.

The Ministry of Environment (Ministry), through the Conservation Officer Service and the Environmental Protection Division will continue compliance and enforcement of regulations against illegal dumping on Crown land, in collaboration with regional districts, municipalities and electoral areas. The Ministry is not aware of a systemic increase in illegal dumping across the province, but acknowledges there may be local issues in parts of the province. Where the municipality or regional district can identify this, the Ministry is willing to work together with local government to determine causes, for example a lack of suitable or cost effective recycling or disposal options, and appropriate mitigation, and/or enforcement actions. At this time the Ministry of Environment does not foresee a need for additional financial or human resources, and is willing to partner with local governments on a case by case basis to resolve specific illegal dumping challenges.

B90 NATURAL AREA TAX EXEMPTION PROGRAM

WHEREAS the Islands Trust currently offers a Natural Area Protection Tax Exemption Program which provides property tax relief of up to 65% for owners who wish to enter into a conservation covenant to protect important natural features of their property;

AND WHEREAS regional districts may wish to support and encourage property owners to preserve natural areas for the benefit of future generations:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Ministry of Community, Sport & Cultural Development be requested to grant local governments the legislative authority to implement natural area protection tax exemption programs.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development

This is the first time that regional districts have expressed an interest in having the authority to offer a Natural Area Protection Tax Exemption Program; as such this is not an area that is currently under consideration for legislative review. The Province would be willing to work with regional district representatives to consider questions such as the priority of legislative change for regional districts and applicability of the Natural Area Protection Tax Exemption modelled on the Islands Trust to regional districts and the success of the Islands Trust Natural Area Protection Tax Exemption Program.

B91 DEVELOPMENT OF A NATURE & CLIMATE CONSERVATION STRATEGY

WHEREAS the Province-led Biodiversity BC has declared that without immediate action, BC's globally significant biodiversity and the ecological services on which we all depend, are vulnerable to rapid deterioration due to the challenges posed by expanding human settlement and development, especially in light of climate change;

AND WHEREAS the 179 local governments to date that have signed-on to the BC Climate Action Charter, recognize both the urgent need to implement effective measures to reduce GHG emissions and anticipate and prepare for climate change impacts, and that protecting the environment can be done in ways that promote economic prosperity, e.g., forest conservation carbon credits:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM recommend that the Province of British Columbia develop a science-based nature and climate conservation strategy, that would concurrently accomplish:

- allowing more species to survive and adapt to a changing climate;
- protecting the natural carbon stores in our primary and intact forests and other ecosystems;
- protecting water and other vital ecosystem services that support both human well-being and a conservation-based economy; and
- supporting sustainable natural resource management that is based on prioritizing the needs of the ecosystems.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment

While there is no single strategy that addresses the full spectrum of issues raised by this resolution, the B.C. Government is using a wide range of approaches (including legislation, policies, procedures and guidance) to maintain BC's biodiversity and ecological services in light of human settlement, development, and climate change. Legislation such as the *Forest and Range Practices Act*, the *Oil and Gas Activities Act* and the *Fish Protection Act* include significant provisions to achieve these goals. Additionally, there are a number of more recent initiatives that directly address the intent of this resolution. These initiatives include:

Climate Change Adaptation:

The majority of the scientific community agrees that the primary strategy for protecting biodiversity in an era of rapid climate change is to focus on connectivity. The Government of British Columbia currently protects about 14% of the land base. About 74% of this protected area is forested contributing to both carbon stores and ongoing carbon sequestration. Many other jurisdictions have some level of protection on both land and water within B.C. including the federal government, regional districts, municipalities and private landowners. Together this represents a sizable portion of the province and is a significant contribution to landscape connectivity and the future of biodiversity and carbon management in British Columbia.

Forest Carbon Offset Protocol:

The Government of British Columbia has developed this protocol to guide the design, development, quantification and verification of B.C. forest carbon offsets from a broad range of forest activities on private and public land in B.C. Forest carbon is an increasingly significant component of climate action, and the protocol ensures that forest carbon offsets developed in B.C. meet domestic and international quality standards.

Water Act Modernization and Water Science Strategy:

Ensuring enough water is set aside to protect stream health and healthy ecosystems; improving water security, efficiency, and conservation; and regulating water during times of scarcity are key elements of the Province's proposed new *Water Sustainability Act*. In addition, Government is leading development of a Water Science Strategy to better link science-based information and knowledge with decision-making, policy development and operational practice.

Conservation Framework & Species at Risk Task Force:

The Conservation Framework is British Columbia's approach for maintaining the rich biodiversity of the province. The Framework provides a set of science-based tools and actions for conserving species and ecosystems in B.C. The report of the Species at Risk Task Force was released on July 4th, 2011. The report makes 16 recommendations addressing legislation, environmental management, First Nations engagement and public engagement. See response to Resolution B41 for more detail.

Environmental Mitigation Policy:

The BC Ministry of Environment, along with the Environmental Assessment Office and other natural resource management agencies, is developing a new environmental policy to support a consistent approach to mitigating adverse impacts on valued environmental assets from development projects and activities. This policy and associated procedures will help guide staff and provide consistent advice and information about environmental mitigation to statutory decision-makers who make authorization decisions in the provincial government. This policy is currently being drafted based on research on similar policies and analysis of feedback on the initial concept from stakeholders and First Nations. Following another opportunity to review and comment on the draft, the Environmental Mitigation Policy will be revised, and then applied on a trial basis in 2013. To be effective, environmental mitigation actions, including ecological restoration, need to consider climate change.

The approaches highlighted here engage the full range of government agencies charged with the management of BC's natural resources and are believed to be a more effective approach than a single Ministry strategy.

B92 AUTHORITY TO CONTROL WEEDS

WHEREAS the *Local Government Act* authorizes regional districts to "require the owners or occupiers of real property, or their agents, to clear the property of brush, trees, noxious weeds or other growths"; however, "noxious weeds" is not defined in this legislative context;

AND WHEREAS the *Community Charter* authorizes municipal councils to exercise their authority over "trees, weeds, or other growths that council considers should be removed, cut down or trimmed", which appears to give municipalities broader authority to control weeds than regional districts are afforded under the *Local Government Act*:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM lobby the provincial government to change its legislation to ensure that regional districts have the same authority as municipalities to control any plant species that the regional district board considers undesirable.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community Sport and Cultural Development

One of the key findings of UBCM's Regional District Task Force, was that BC is diverse with different challenges and opportunities in each regional district. "One size does not fit all" was an important theme for the Task Force. Consistent with the Task Force's recommendations the Ministry of Community Sport and Cultural Development is committed to continuing to explore how Regional District effectiveness, accountability, and efficiency might be enhanced by using current legislative tools.

To accommodate BC's regional diversity, the Province has customized some regulatory authorities in regions. For example, Central Okanagan Regional District has the authority to regulate business licenses, and the Capital Regional District was provided with the authority to regulate cats, and has additional powers to regulate public health.

If a regional district requires additional authority to address a specific weed control issue, the regional district could provide a proposal to the Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development to determine if such an authority could be provided by regulation.

B94 MAINTENANCE OF ENGINEERED DITCHES

WHEREAS in many communities a network of drainage ditches has been constructed in order to channel water, establish and maintain the productivity of agricultural land and to protect urban areas from flooding;

AND WHEREAS these engineered ditches, to be effective, need to be cleaned on a regular basis, and staff from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and the Ministry of Environment have exercised unreasonable control over the timing and method of cleaning the ditches:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request that the provincial government (through the Ministry of Agriculture) confirm that the maintenance of engineered ditches be recognized as an acceptable farm practice under the *Right to Farm Act*.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Agriculture

The *Farm Practices Protection* (*Right to Farm) Act (FPPA)* does not apply to activities conducted by local governments, only farmers. Activities conducted by farm operators under the *FPPA* must still abide by provincial and federal environmental legislation and policies.

In April 2005, the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection (now Ministry of Environment) and the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans jointly prepared a "Drainage Management Guide" that outlined a process for farmers to clean constructed ditches on their farms. This guide can also be used by local governments to develop a drainage maintenance plan for channels maintained by local governments. Once approved and signed off by all agencies, the plan can be used to conduct drainage maintenance without further approvals from agencies for many engineered or constructed channels and ditches.

B95 AMEND THE BC *MINES ACT*

WHEREAS the British Columbia *Mines Act* does not provide the capability to adequately address impacts from mining activities, including gravel operations, on community health, ground and surface water, road safety, agriculture, properties and property rights, wildlife habitat, and the wellbeing of our communities overall;

AND WHEREAS the *Mines Act* is critically outdated, does not support sustainability objectives, and overrides more current environmental standards in the *Water Act*, local bylaws, and other Acts and laws:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Government of British Columbia amend the BC *Mines Act* with input from members of the public and First Nations similar to methods used to amend BC's *Water Act* and to update it to be compatible with sustainable protective environmental law and other acts.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Energy and Mines

The permitting process for mine projects fully considers all health, safety and environmental issues. A permit will not be issued unless the statutory decision maker is satisfied the operation will meet all applicable standards.

The *Mines Act* allows for input from the public, local government, provincial and federal government agencies and health organizations and this input may influence the conditions that are included in the permit where appropriate.

B96 BC *WATER ACT* MODERNIZATION

WHEREAS many water management and access priorities have changed since the first enactment of the *Water Act*, including the introduction of groundwater regulation, development of priority user access and inclusion of local governments in water access permitting and enforcement;

AND WHEREAS local government has not previously been involved in the management of water resources in British Columbia and local government involvement in the development of the Water Sustainability Act is of paramount importance:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that input and involvement of local government, through the UBCM, be active and ongoing as the Water Sustainability Act is developed and new water management roles are created.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment

The Province has been engaging UBCM and local governments on *Water Act* modernization since 2008 through regional workshops, discussion papers, UBCM forums, teleconferences and the Living Water Smart Blog. To date, the Province has received over 50 written submissions from local governments.

In response to engagement efforts, many stakeholders, including local governments, have requested the opportunity to review more detailed policies. Accordingly, the provincial government has committed to take more time to further engage with British Columbians on draft legislation in 2012 before it is finalized. We will continue to work closely with UBCM staff to identify options and opportunities to engage with local governments throughout 2012.

The Province will continue to respect the Protocol it signed with UBCM in 2001 including its commitment to consult with UBCM and local governments on changes to environmental legislation, regulations, standards, policies or programs.
Ministry staff are also working closely with the Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development to ensure the proposed *Water Sustainability Act* will meet the needs of local government.

B97 PROTECTION OF LAKES & RIVERS

WHEREAS the health of British Columbia lakes and rivers is deteriorating due to increasing pollution, recreational use, development, and insufficient regulatory enforcement by senior levels of government;

AND WHEREAS local governments do not have adequate regulatory powers or the funding capacity to sufficiently protect local lakes and rivers:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province of British Columbia restore funding and resources to provincial ministries to ensure the adequate protection of BC lakes and rivers, or provide the enabling regulatory authority and financial means to local governments to properly protect and manage lakes and rivers at the local level, should they so wish.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations.

Government's 2010 Lakeshore Development Compliance project identified low compliance with the requirement to obtain an authorization under the *Water Act* for modifications to the lakeshore or meet bylaw requirements under the Riparian Areas Regulation. The report also suggested that there are significant impacts to aquatic habitat as a result of non-authorized shoreline work. The provincial government is currently reviewing the results of this study to determine what can be done to enhance the effectiveness of current programs and regulations which protect the Province's lakes and rivers.

Protection of lakes and streams is also being addressed through the following initiatives:

The provincial government continues to support local collaborative processes and mechanisms such as the Shuswap Lake Integrated Planning Process (SLIPP) and the Cowichan Watershed Board to improve agency coordination, public outreach and compliance.

The Riparian Areas Regulation provides that named local governments must use the tools available to them in Part 26 of the *Local Government Act* to not approve or allow stream or lakeside development unless riparian fish habitat is maintained, protected, and/or provided with an opportunity of recovery. The Province, through its Intergovernmental Cooperation Agreement with UBCM and DFO, continues to work with local governments to meet their regulatory requirements in bringing in and implementing effective bylaws, in particular ensuring their ability to deal with non-compliant development activities that impact stream and lakefront fish habitat.
The Province is developing a new *Water Sustainability Act* that builds on and will replace the current *Water Act*. Under the proposed new act, provincial water objectives

will be established and the opportunity to employ different governance approaches and new tools such as water sustainability plans will be enabled to support increased collaboration and participation.

The Province is also reviewing Part 7 of the Water Regulation (Changes in and about a Stream). A primary objective of the review is to identify opportunities to improve the effectiveness of the regulation to ensure that water quality, fish and wildlife habitat are not compromised.

Funding for additional staff and resources must be evaluated in the context of the provincial government's overall priorities.

B98 RENEWABLE ENERGY REQUIREMENT

WHEREAS all levels of government have a moral and economic imperative to enable solutions that help prevent dangerous climate change, and in BC the provincial government and local governments have made specific commitments to do so, such as: the provincial government's greenhouse gas emissions reductions targets of 33% below 2007 levels by 2020 and 80% below 2007 levels by 2050 (*Greenhouse Gas Reduction Targets Act*); the local government greenhouse gas reduction targets set in their Official Community Plans and Regional Growth Strategies (as required in the *Local Government (Green Communities) Statues Amendment Act*); and the Province's goal of net zero homes and buildings by 2020;

AND WHEREAS greenhouse gas emissions from buildings make up 11.4% of total provincial emissions (based on the 2008 provincial inventory), and local governments have limited jurisdiction to require the energy efficiency or renewable energy improvements to buildings needed to meet the above commitments:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the UBCM and member local governments work with the provincial government to develop an amendment to the provincial building code to implement the option for a local government to impose a 10% minimum renewable energy requirement for new residential and commercial buildings within its jurisdiction.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Energy and Mines

The Province is currently developing a code change to improve energy performance for new housing as part of the 2012 Code. We will be launching a public consultation on this provision later this year.

Before we could consider a regulation requiring 10 percent renewable energy for all new buildings we would first need to look at a number of criteria, primarily how the construction costs would affect the final purchase price for homebuyers.

The fall consultation will provide an opportunity for builders, consumers and local governments to review the changes and provide feedback on what is currently being considered. We will also include costing estimates to help define the impact and shape the discussion.

B99 CONTAMINATED SITES

WHEREAS the BC Environmental Management Act currently burdens local governments by the triggering of a contaminated site remediation process when a zoning, subdivision, development, development variance, or demolition permit is applied for;

AND WHEREAS the environmental remediation process is so onerous and costly that it can actually block attempts to develop the subject property in regions where property values are modest:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM petition the provincial government to increase financial assistance to local governments to offset these real negative economic impacts and initiate research to find sustainable solutions to the ongoing detrimental affects to rural economies that the contaminated sites provincial legislation is causing.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment

The Ministry of Environment recognizes the importance of balancing economic and environmental factors in delivering its environmental protection mandate. The contaminated sites regulatory framework ensures that potentially contaminated properties are investigated, and if necessary remediated to ensure protection of human health and the environment, prior to redevelopment and reuse.

The contaminated sites framework is a flexible, polluter-pay-based regime. It is recognized that costs to investigate and, where necessary, remediate sites can be high, particularly in communities where land values are modest. However, the costs to address human health or environmental impacts resulting from unaddressed contamination at former industrial and commercial properties are typically much higher.

In 2009, the Province announced the launch of the $10 Million B.C. Brownfield Renewal Funding Program, a 5-year initiative to encourage the redevelopment of brownfields. To date, $4.2 Million in funding has been awarded to 60 applicants in 44 communities across B.C. to help finance environmental studies on sites owned by local governments, not for profit organizations, First Nation groups, individuals and corporations.

For more information on the B.C. Brownfield Renewal Funding Program please visit: http://www.brownfieldrenewal.gov.bc.ca/

B102 AGRICULTURAL LAND VALUES

WHEREAS the Agricultural Land Commission was established to ensure the preservation of agricultural land and to preserve and enable farm businesses throughout the province of British Columbia; however, increasingly, land with agricultural designation in the lower mainland is removed from the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), while land in the central and northern areas of the province is being added to the ALR to achieve a net balance on the total hectares of land within the ALR;

AND WHEREAS there is a definite disparity in the agricultural productivity value between land in the lower mainland and land in the northern and central areas of the province, resulting in an actual overall loss of productive capacity of the agricultural land being protected as such:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM lobby the provincial government to develop and implement an Agricultural Land Value Index, which will assign a specific agricultural land value to properties in the Agricultural Land Reserve that reflects the actual farming capability of the land rather than just a general ALR designation.

RESPONSE: Provincial Agricultural Land Commission

The Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) agrees that the accuracy of the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) boundaries in some regions of the province should be examined to accurately reflect land that is suitable for farm use. This position was echoed by the Commission's in its response to the September 2010 "Audit of the Agricultural Land Commission" by the Office of the Auditor General of British Columbia.

Working with local governments to examine the ALR boundary in the context of regional and local land use planning exercises has been the primary approach taken by the Commission during the past two decades. This approach has been ad hoc and reactive and not what the Commission believes is comprehensive as was the case when it undertook and co-ordinated planned ALR boundary fine-tuning exercises in the 1980s.

When the Commission carries out fine-tuning reviews it considers factors such as the actual agricultural land capability and productivity information to evaluate the suitability of land to remain in, or to be added to the ALR. The Commission has noted previously that in specifc areas of the province, notably the central, north and southeast, that ALR boundary reviews may be warranted.

The rate of exclusion of lands from the ALR throughout the province has steadily declined over the past 25 years and exclusions have largely been based on decisions to applications by land owners. Inclusion of land has been responsive to individual land owner applications as well as applications on arable Crown lands in the north and central regions of the province that were never part of the original ALR designation in the early 1970s. Changes to ALR boundaries in northern regions as compared to southern regions are unrelated and the Commission does not seek to attain a provincial balance between exclusions and inclusions. Each case, whether it is an application or a broader area review, is considered on the individual merits of each situation taking into account the land's capability and suitability.

The Chair's report "Review of the Agricultural Land Commission - Moving Forward: A Strategic Vision of the Agricultural Land Commission for Future Generations" was submitted to the Minister of Agriculture in November 2010.

The Province continues to be committed to the ALR and the protection of agricultural land to support farmers and farm families, and on November 14, 2011, government announced several initiatives aimed at improving the structure and sustainability of the ALC. Improvements to the ALC have been made in terms of transitional funding that provides the ALC with resources to transition to a more self-supporting operating model by 2013 and to improve information services and mapping. Legislative changes in place as of November 25, 2011 will discourage repeat applications to exclude agricultural land, enhance the ALC's enforcement capacity and encourage farming by allowing the ALC to focus on proactive land use planning with local governments rather than reacting to applications. Further details may be found at http://www.newsroom.gov.bc.ca/2011/11/province-strengthens-agricultural-land-commission.html and http://www.newsroom.gov.bc.ca/2011/11/changes-strengthening-agricultural-land-commission-now-law.html

B104 SUPPORT FOR BRIDGES PROGRAM

WHEREAS BC's forest dependent communities wish to recover from the forest industry's downturn of recent years, and the small scale forest operators including community forests, First Nations tenures, woodlot licensees and small private woodland owners are integral to that recovery;

AND WHEREAS the BRIDGES project is an innovative web-based tool to connect British Columbia-based buyers and sellers that is supported by a consortium of partners including: BC Community Forest Association, Federation of BC Woodlot Associations, all three interior Beetle Action Coalitions, Community Futures, Northern Development Initiative Trust, Western Economic Diversification and the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Innovation:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government be strongly urged to continue to support the establishment and ongoing maintenance of the BRIDGES project for the success and expansion of the small scale forestry industry in BC's forest dependent communities with the same vigour that it has created Forest Innovation Investment to support BC's major forest companies with their foreign export marketing.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Jobs, Tourism & Innovation

The Province has undertaken a variety of significant initiatives over the past five years to promote value-added wood production and increase the amount of timber available to Community Forests, Woodlots and First Nations tenures.

The province will continue to aggressively promote the use of wood and promotion of value-added wood production in BC.

As acknowledged, the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Innovation has financially contributed to the creation of the BRIDGES web tool with other funding partners. However, the Ministry believes that the BRIDGES web tool - once fully operational - needs to be financially self-supporting.

B105 REINVESTING IN FOREST STEWARDSHIP

WHEREAS BC communities rely on forests to support their economic, social and environmental well-being;

AND WHEREAS there is widespread and growing public concern about the current and future health of BC's forests;

AND WHEREAS over the past decade the provincial government has made deep cuts to the public agencies engaged in protecting, managing and enhancing BC's forests, seriously eroding their capacity to effectively manage our publicly-owned forest resources and provide adequate public oversight in the woods:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM urge the provincial government to reinvest in forest stewardship, including:

- immediately increasing funding for forest inventories;
- restoring the Ministry of Forests research branch, and enhancing funding for forest research;
- increasing funding to mitigate the risk of forest fires in BC communities;
- making a significant, long term investment in expanded reforestation of public forest lands; and
- increasing funding and restoring staff levels in the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Resource Operations to pre-2001 levels.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

The government conducts and maintains inventories of a wide range of forest resources (e.g., timber, water, visual resources and ecology). Several ministries and work units within FLNR allocate funds and staff to conduct and maintain these inventories. For example, GeoBC and the Information Management Branch provide the information technology services that house and make forest resource inventories publicly available.

Government directs funding for the vegetation inventory (sometimes called the timber inventory, the forest cover inventory, or the forest inventory) through the Land-Based Investment Program. Funding for inventory remains a ministry priority. As of August 25, 2011, the planned Land Base Investment allocation to inventory in 2011/12 is $6.36 million with the following breakdown:

- $0.15 million for visual resources inventory
- $0.5 million for ecosystem mapping inventory
- $5.71 million for vegetation inventory

The government remains committed to long-term research, and an integrated research program will provide credible, science-based evidence for natural resource sector decision making. The Ministries of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations and Environment are currently working collaboratively on a natural resource sector approach to research.

The current fiscal climate has been challenging for funding in many areas, including forest research. The broader funding issues are discussed as a part of the natural resource sector approach to research. In the short term, the 2011/12 budget maintains the ministry's research funding at the same level as last fiscal year.

Reducing the risks that wildfires pose to communities remains a priority of government through the work of the Wildfire Management Branch. Since 2004, the Province has provided $62 million to local governments in partnership with the federal government to assist with the mitigation of interface wildfires and preparation of community wildfire protection plans.

Forests For Tomorrow (FFT) was introduced by the Provincial government in 2005 as a long-term investment to expand reforestation on public forest lands. FFT funds reforestation needs on wildfire and mountain pine beetle (MPB) impacted areas outside of harvested areas which have legal reforestation obligations.

Since inception, FFT has planted over 54 million seedlings on more than 45,000 ha, invested nearly $200 million in reforestation activities, and ground-surveyed 400 000 ha impacted by wildfire and MPB. FFT is investing $34.5M in reforestation related activities in 2011/12 ,which include planning nearly 14 million seedlings, sowing over 20 million seedlings, surveying nearly 300,000 ha, and writing prescriptions for nearly 14,000 ha. Government intends to continue to fund FFT as a component of the Land Based Investment Strategy.

While government maintains a policy of prudent fiscal management to return to a balanced budget, the ministry continues to explore efficiencies and collaborate with its partners in order to meet its goals and fulfil its mandate.

B106 ELIMINATION OF MSP PREMIUMS

WHEREAS the Premier of British Columbia has announced a policy of putting families first and seniors are crucial members of our families;

AND WHEREAS seniors in BC are the only ones in Canada who pay provincial medical insurance premiums:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) call upon the Province of British Columbia to eliminate medical insurance premiums for seniors in BC and to bear any associated costs

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

In British Columbia premiums are payable for Medical Services Plan (MSP) coverage; there are no special rates for seniors. As of January 1, 2011, monthly MSP rates are $60.50 for one person, $109.00 for a family of two, and $121.00 for a family of three or more.

The current rate structure and assistance programs are designed to offer a basic monthly rate to the majority of eligible British Columbians and premium subsides to those in financial need. If the person qualifies for premium assistance, that rate is reduced by 20, 40, 60, 80 or 100 percent depending on the percentage of subsidy being provided.

Each province determines independently what combination of funding sources it uses to pay for health care services. BC's health care programs are funded through a number of sources: the federal contributions; general provincial taxes such as those levied on fuel, property, consumer sales and services, and personal and corporate income; and premiums. For example, Ontario charges a health premium that is collected through the income tax system. Other provinces use different funding formulas to finance their medical plans, relying more heavily on general provincial taxes.

In 2010, premiums in BC generated over $1.8 billion to put toward our health care costs. If the provincial government were to consider discontinuing the collection of premiums, a significant increase to income tax or provincial sales tax would need to be considered in order to maintain services.

Residents of BC continue to be asked to share in the funding of healthcare costs if they have the financial resources to do so. This approach is intended to ensure access to a system of quality health care for all British Columbians. As BC has an aging population any loss in premium contributions would have a significant impact on health services in the future.

B107 WATER REGULATIONS

WHEREAS the federal and provincial governments require full compliance with the BC *Drinking Water Protection Act* and Regulations and health authorities consistently monitor British Columbia municipalities to ensure safe standards are being met;

AND WHEREAS no government grants or loan programs exist that are large enough to assist municipalities or small private water systems:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM urge the provincial government to amend the *Drinking Water Protection Act* and Regulations to exempt small municipalities with a population of less than 5,000,that are in good standing, and show no danger to the citizens in those same municipalities;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that UBCM urge the provincial government to provide funding opportunities that reflect the true cost of the upgrades to aging infrastructure particularly in the rural areas of the province of British Columbia.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health and Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development

The Ministry of Health has been working with the UBCM Small Water Systems Working Group which was tasked with presenting recommendations on addressing the challenges faced by small water systems at the September 2011 UBCM Annual Convention. Complete exemptions from the drinking water health safeguards in the *Drinking Water Protection Act* are unlikely, but the province will look into UBCM proposals to fine tune approaches under the legislation that are appropriate to smaller populations.

UBCM leads the Gas Tax Agreement which is a tri-party agreement between the federal, provincial and local governments of BC provideing both federal and provincial funding for local government water systems. The GTA will see a federal transfer of $1.6 billion over the course of 4 years to 2015 in support of various infrastructure projects for all local governments, including drinking water

B108 INCLUSIVE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY SCHOOL CURRICULUM

WHEREAS physical literacy is crucial to the inception of positive lifelong activity patterns and healthy lifestyles in children; however the social well-being of children may be affected if they are not able to access all school programs and facilities;

AND WHEREAS the Let's Play Program in association with the Rick Hansen Foundation is an example of a success story of integrating seamless access into school programs for all students regardless of physical ability:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM lobby the Province to implement a provincial adaptation to curricula that will encourage:

1) inclusive physical activities in all grades, particularly in physical education;
2) adaptation of wording in provincial curricula that will reflect seamless inclusion for all students;
3) promotion of input and awareness in the development of resources and services (or programs) that will enhance inclusive physical activity; and
4) adaptation and enhancement of post secondary education to teach and reflect inclusive physical activity through sport and recreation, healthy living, education and other related programs.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Education

Inclusive physical activities in all grades, particularly in physical education:

British Columbia is committed to improving school health outcomes and encouraging more students to adopt healthy lifestyle habits. British Columbia also promotes an inclusive education system in which students with special needs are fully participating members of a community of learners.

Adaptation of wording in provincial curricula that will reflect seamless inclusion for all students:

The current Physical Education (PE) curriculum, mandatory from Kindergarten to Grade 10, is designed to provide opportunities for students to develop knowledge, movement skills, and positive attitudes and behaviours that contribute to a healthy, active lifestyle.

Since September 2008, all British Columbia students including those with physical disabilities have been expected to meet the requirements of the Ministry of Education's Daily Physical Activity (DPA) program. DPA requires Kindergarten to Grade 7 students to participate in at least 30 minutes of activity per day during school hours; students in Grades 8 and 9 are required to participate in 30 minutes of activity per day during school hours or 150 minutes of activity per week in or out of school hours; Grades 10-12 students need to participate in 150 minutes of activity per week, in or out of school hours.

Promotion of input and awareness in the development of resources and services (or programs) that will enhance inclusive physical activity:

With regard to the resolution's comments about the Let's Play Program, there are certainly a number of resources available to help educators work with students to increase activity levels and promote healthy lifestyles. Local boards of education and independent school authorities are responsible for selecting the learning resources or programs they use. This allows them to select or develop resources that address the specific needs of their own school, students and communities.

Adaptation and enhancement of post secondary education to teach and reflect inclusive physical activity through sport and recreation, healthy living, education and other related programs:

The Ministry of Education has no plans to undertake the revision of any curriculum in advance of the personalized learning transformation efforts underway. However, the concept of inclusion can be considered as part of the personalized learning curriculum projects over the next few years.

B112 EXCLUSION OF WATER SERVICES FROM INTERNATIONAL TRADE AGREEMENTS

WHEREAS Canada's public water services (supply, distribution and treatment systems) are community assets that local governments oversee and manage in the best interest of the public;

AND WHEREAS the inclusion of water services in the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) would undermine the public control and accountability of these vital assets:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM call on the Government of British Columbia to remove water services from any commitments under the proposed Canada-EU CETA and that the Federation of Canadian Municipalities call on the Government of Canada to remove water services from its negotiations on CETA with the European Union.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Innovation

The supply, distribution and treatment of Canada's public water services represent significant opportunities in public procurement across Canada. For this reason, it is expected that the European Union will be interested in those procurement opportunities.

Canada's existing trade agreements do not in any way threaten public control over water services by forcing privatization or deregulation. These are decisions that will continue to be made by elected officials. It is expected that Canada will not derogate from this principle.

In addition, nothing in the trade agreements prevent governments from setting standards to ensure that all British Columbians continue to have access to safe drinking water.

B114 SUCCESSION PLANNING FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

WHEREAS local government revenues are oversubscribed due to a continued reliance on property taxation and off loading from other governments;

AND WHEREAS small local governments are challenged to recruit, retain and compensate senior staff in the current environment:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM lobby the Province of BC to support local government efforts to engage in succession planning that will lead to better recruitment, retention and compensation for qualified senior staff.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development

The Ministry supports local government succession planning to anticipate local government challenges in attracting, retaining and developing local government managers. It has long supported the Board of Examiners certification process and various scholarship programs which are directed at professional development within the local government system. The Ministry also partnered with the Municipal Finance Authority and the Local Government Management Association in a three year pilot project, the Local Government Intern Program.

The Ministry is committed to continuing to work with the UBCM, LGMA and educational institutions to develop strategies to deal with the professional management challenges facing local governments, especially smaller, more remote communities.

B115 IMPROVEMENT OF ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES

WHEREAS the unauthorized disclosure of confidential information in the custody of local government by elected officials is a breach of the duty to respect confidentiality provisions of the *Community Charter*, the Oath of Office; provisions of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*; and undermines the public trust in the elected body;

AND WHEREAS existing legislation provides inadequate provision to sanction elected officials who breach their duty to respect confidentiality:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM, the Local Government Leadership Academy and the Province of British Columbia explore ways to strengthen policies, practices, and legislation so as to foster best practices and enable stronger accountability measures among local government elected officials, up to and including, larger fines and/or disqualification from office for those who are found to be in breach of legislation.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development

The Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development continues to work with the UBCM and the Local Government Leadership Academy (LGLA) to enhance the preparedness of locally elected officials for the responsibilities of elected office - including understanding confidentiality and other accountability provisions in the *Community Charter*.

The Ministry is prepared to work with the UBCM and the LGLA to explore ways to strengthen policies and practices to further effective and fair implementation of accountability measures for locally elected officials. However, a full review of the confidentiality issue, including consideration of the importance of “whistle-blowers” in some situations, would be necessary before considering any legislative amendments.

B118 TAX CREDITS FOR EMERGENCY RESPONDERS

WHEREAS volunteer emergency responders, representing a significant cost savings to government, are essential to providing adequate emergency coverage in smaller communities throughout Canada and it is becoming increasingly difficult to find willing individuals to volunteer their time in critical emergency response areas such as ambulance attending, firefighting, road rescue and search and rescue;

AND WHEREAS UBCM, since 1998, has consistently endorsed and lobbied the provincial and federal governments to explore various tax benefits as a mechanism to recognize the contribution of volunteer firefighters;

AND WHEREAS a tax exemption for the first $1,000 in honoraria paid to emergency services volunteers for their time is not adequate compensation for the considerable time dedicated to classroom/field training and other preparatory activities as well as to actual emergency response callouts;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the UBCM once again lobby the provincial and federal governments to amend the *Income Tax Act* to provide unpaid volunteer emergency responders with a meaningful tax exemption as sign of recognition and appreciation for the voluntary service and government cost savings they provide.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Finance

The design of the tax system balances fairness, competitiveness, efficiency, administrative simplicity and economic objectives.

Since 2001, BC has reduced provincial personal income taxes for most taxpayers by 37 per cent or more. When all taxes are considered, British Columbians generally have one of the lowest tax burdens in the country.

The Minister of Finance reviews provincial taxes and considers changes each year in preparation of the provincial budget.

B119 REPEAL SECTIONS 420-427 OF THE *LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT*

WHEREAS administration of Sections 420 to 427 of the *Local Government Act* is onerous and costly to local governments;

AND WHEREAS the provisions of the Surveyor of Taxes Forfeiture Cycle are clear, concise and do not provide for the involvement of third parties:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM petition the Province of British Columbia to repeal Sections 420 to 427 of the *Local Government Act* and replace it with provisions similar to those of the Surveyor of Taxes Forfeiture Cycle, and that those provisions ensure that any unredeemed properties revert to the municipality.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development

The Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development (Ministry) surveyed municipal tax collectors in 1998 to obtain information on the effectiveness of tax sale and their comments on the process. The results showed that very few properties typically go to tax sale and that the process is highly successful in bringing in uncollected taxes and averting transfer of title to a third-party purchaser.

However, in March 2001, the Ministry issued a Discussion Paper on the tax collection and tax sale process. It presented a number of options for modifying the current system, including adopting a forfeiture model. Responses to the options presented were mixed, with no consensus that forfeiture should replace the current system.

The Ministry then examined the possibility of making small changes to the existing process to address some of the perceived shortcomings. Upon further review, the Ministry concluded that these changes would not provide sufficient improvement to the system and might have unintended consequences.

Specific examples of situations of where and how the Surveyor of Taxes Forfeiture Cycle provisions would benefit municipalities versus s.420 – s.427 of the *Local Government Act* would be useful in order for the Ministry to consider the need for and feasibility of legislative change.

B120 INTEREST RATE ON ARREARS & DELINQUENT TAXES

WHEREAS the Lieutenant Governor establishes interest rates on taxes in arrears or delinquent by adding three percent to the prime lending rate;

AND WHEREAS local governments may be owed outstanding taxes which cause a hardship to operate within a budget:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM urge the Lieutenant Governor to increase the interest rate on arrears and delinquent taxes to an interest rate comparable to consumer debt.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development

The interest rates on arrears and delinquent property taxes are established under Section 11(3) of the *Taxation (Rural Area) Act*. The rates are also applicable to Sections 412 and 417 of the *Local Government Act* and Section 245, 246 and 254 of the *Community Charter* to preserve a provincial wide standard on interest rates on unpaid taxes.

Currently, these rates are calculated by adding three percent to the prime lending rate (as of the 15th of the month preceding the effective date) of the principal banker to the Province.

The complaint that the prescribed property tax interest rate lags behind current bank lending rates is valid only in the relatively rare periods of steeply rising general interest rates. Any disincentive to pay property taxes in this situation is small, and is offset by the contrary situation where market interest rates fall sharply causing an incentive to pay. It is unlikely that a small increase in the interest rate charged on overdue rural property tax accounts would result in a significant increase in payment compliance.

The objective of the Province in the application of interest to real property tax accounts receivable is to set a rate that will encourage payment without being usurious. Municipalities already are required to levy an immediate 10% penalty when taxes are not paid by the due date creating a significant incentive to pay taxes on time. In addition, municipalities only have to carry the taxes for three years until the property must be taken to tax sale to recover the outstanding taxes making collection relatively risk free. Due to these factors, the Ministry is satisfied with the current arrangement for setting the interest rate on unpaid property taxes at this time.

B123 LEED GOLD HOSPITAL CAPITAL PROJECTS

WHEREAS the provincial LEED Gold standard has been instituted province wide for construction of public infrastructure and is applicable to construction of new medical facilities, including hospitals and residential care facilities;

AND WHEREAS the LEED Gold standard is designed to make these facilities more energy and cost effective and can add an additional 3% to 10% to the capital cost of these facilities;

AND WHEREAS the regional hospital boards and their local tax payers contribute 40% towards the capital cost of new facilities but gain no direct benefit from the LEED Gold standard as its results contribute only to operating costs:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM lobby the Province of BC to mitigate the increased cost to the regional health board contribution of the capital cost of these new facilities by reducing regional hospital districts' share of construction costs by basing the split on the base line cost before cost of instituting LEED Gold standards on a project by project basis.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

In the February 2008 Throne Speech, government directed that all provincial public sector buildings be constructed to Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold or equivalent standards.

In practice, this requirement applies to newly constructed buildings and not to renovations. The majority of capital projects involve renovation of existing buildings or replacement of medical and diagnostic equipment. A relatively small number of projects in the Ministry of Health's (the Ministry) capital plan are new buildings.

Those new buildings are designed and constructed to LEED Gold standard for improved energy efficiency and provide a higher quality workplace environment (i.e. better indoor air) for patients, staff and visitors than non-LEED facilities.

While there may be a small incremental cost to achieve LEED Gold during the initial construction phase, this is more than offset by the improved health care environment that benefits the entire community in which the new facility is located.

Building to LEED Gold standard is one of a series of necessary improvements to the environment of modern health facilities in British Columbia and across Canada.

B129 CONTROL OF WATERSHEDS

WHEREAS many local governments draw surface water for their water systems, and such sources are vulnerable to degradation and pollution caused by a variety of industrial and recreational activities;

AND WHEREAS watersheds are not recognized in legislation, leaving local governments without adequate tools to enact measures for the protection of watersheds;

AND WHEREAS many local governments get their drinking water from sources on privately owned land;

AND WHEREAS the provincial health authorities are increasing the requirements for the provision of clean water from local government water systems:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the provincial government to develop a funding program that facilitates local government acquisition of both the watershed and adjacent land for those local governments with water systems on privately owned land;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all activities in watersheds used for drinking water be subject to final approval and control by affected local governments and the Ministry of Environment (MOE), and that MOE be legislatively required to ensure that the quality and quantity of water in watersheds meet provincial health requirements.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment

Ministry of Environment (MOE) acknowledges the importance of source water protection in ensuring safe drinking water regardless of the source location.

Lead responsibility for drinking water protection and the Drinking Water Protection Act (DWPA) is the Ministry of Health and regional Health Authorities. MOE has no statutory authority under DWPA.

In practice, MOE and the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations (MFLNRO) work with Health Authorities to ensure a multi-barrier approach to drinking water protection. For MOE, this includes responsibility for human health related water guidelines, standards and policies and monitoring of source waters. Source water protection is also a key consideration in the Groundwater Protection Regulation, Environmental Management Act and implementation of Living Water Smart. MFLNRO has a strong coordinating and decision making role within BC's watersheds.

B133 CARBON OFFSETS

WHEREAS as per the provincial government's "Becoming Carbon Neutral" guidebook, local governments will be offered three options to balance their carbon footprint in order to achieve carbon neutrality, commencing in 2013;

AND WHEREAS the two options which do not involve purchasing carbon credits are restricted to funding community emission reduction projects that are outside the scope of the local government's corporate emissions boundary, which would seem contrary to the intent of the program, which is to reduce government's carbon footprint:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM lobby the provincial government to allow balancing or offsetting local government emissions through local community emission reduction projects within the scope of the local government's corporate emissions boundary in order to retain taxpayer dollars in the communities from which they have originated, while encouraging the reduction of government's carbon footprint.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Developments

The joint Provincial-UBCM Green Communities Committee (GCC) has responsibility for developing a common approach to carbon neutrality under the Climate Action Charter. The Carbon Neutral Framework (the Framework) was developed by the GCC to support local governments in reducing their corporate greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and meeting their commitment to work to achieve their goal of being carbon neutral for 2012. Under the Framework, GHG reduction projects that a local government undertakes to balance and/or offset their corporate emissions must be derived from projects that occur outside of their corporate boundary.

Being carbon neutral means that a local government has measured, reduced and offset any remaining corporate emissions to zero on an annual basis. Based on current technologies, and because local governments deliver services to their communities on an ongoing basis, reducing corporate emissions to zero through reduction activities alone is unlikely. As a result, local governments that wish to be carbon neutral will need to invest in emission reductions that occurred outside of their operations (i.e. offsets) that are equal to their remaining carbon footprint – thereby achieving net zero carbon emissions.

Carbon neutrality puts a boundary around a defined set of corporate emissions that must be measured and reduced to zero on an annual basis. This creates an incentive to reduce emissions within that boundary as much as possible so as to reduce the need to purchase offsets. Under the Framework local governments are encouraged to invest in projects within their corporate boundaries so that their emissions are decreased and they receive the associated benefits of cost savings and a reduced overall carbon liability e.g. they will need to purchase fewer offsets to account for the remaining emissions.

Accounting for and reducing emissions within corporate boundaries is the most important aspect of carbon neutrality. The purchase of offsets only occurs after a local government has done all that it can to reduce emissions.

B135 ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION FEES

WHEREAS over the last thirty years, global trade has greatly increased between British Columbia and the rest of the world, resulting in the increased introduction of invasive species into British Columbia;

AND WHEREAS the invasion of these species seriously threatens both our ecosystems and our economy;

AND WHEREAS the Province of British Columbia has recognized the real threats posed by the importation of alien insects, plants, seeds and animals and has responded by forming the Invasive Plant Council of BC; however, the funds required to address invasive species are insufficient to deal with the escalating problem;

AND WHEREAS the costs to address this situation currently rest entirely on the British Columbia taxpayer, and the revenue produced is insufficient to meet the need and would require a substantial tax increase and/or allotment share of general revenue:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM urge the Province of British Columbia to develop a new revenue source through the implementation of environmental protection fees on all incoming freight, and that those revenues be dedicated throughout the province by the Invasive Plant Council of BC and regional districts for the purpose of preventing, mitigating and eradicating invasive species;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that cargo certified as weed-free by the BC Cattlemen's Association, or other recognized agency, will be exempt from the levy.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

The proposal to implement an environmental protection fee on all incoming freight and direct those revenues to address invasive species could have merit; however, further research is warranted. Some immediate areas that would have to be explored with this proposed funding mechanism would include potential trade and agreement implications, practicality of implementation, fairness and equity. Movement of freight is but one of many vectors of invasive species introduction and spread.

The issue of sustainable, long-term funding for invasive species management is long-standing in British Columbia. Currently, an Invasive Species Strategy for the province is being drafted by stakeholders and land managers, including the provincial government, and facilitated by the Invasive Plant Council of BC. One component of this work will be a green paper on the levels of funding required and potential mechanisms to secure funding to adequately address invasive species in BC. The particular proposal presented by the UBCM will be tabled for consideration in the development of the green paper.

B136 IMPORTANCE OF MECHANICAL INSULATION

WHEREAS the proper application of mechanical insulation, including the materials used, thickness, and installation techniques, has been shown to improve energy efficiency, reduce the greenhouse gas emissions, and provide other benefits for both new and retrofitted buildings;

AND WHEREAS given possible building code changes in the near future, it is a timely opportunity to advocate to the provincial government to consider including additional information and requirements regarding mechanical insulation in any code updates:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request that any future updates or amendments to the BC Building Code include specific, up-to-date requirements on mechanical insulation, including the reproduction of any specifications, such as thickness tables, that may be referenced from other sources, and also include reference to mechanical insulation best practice standards.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Energy and Mines and Minister Responsible for Housing

The BC Building Code sets the minimum standard for energy efficiency of new construction. The Province is considering increasing energy efficiency requirements for all new buildings and substantial building renovations, which may include such requirements as mechanical insulation.

The suitability of a requirement for mechanical insulation for all new buildings would need to be evaluated against multiple criteria including but not limited to:
- cost of construction;
- benefit to climate change mitigation;
- technical feasibility; and
- enforcement feasibility.

B141 GRANT PROGRAMS FOR REGIONAL DISTRICTS

WHEREAS the Province of British Columbia and the Government of Canada have introduced many grant programs such as Towns for Tomorrow;

AND WHEREAS the most recent version of the Towns for Tomorrow Program limited Regional Districts to one application only:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM lobby the provincial government to recognize the unique nature of regional districts and to allow regional boards to endorse and submit up to one application per electoral area for Towns for Tomorrow.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development

The provincial government does recognize the unique nature of regional districts. As such, regional districts were included as eligible applicants in the 2009, and subsequent Towns for Tomorrow Program intakes, when in 2007-2008, regional districts were not considered eligible applicants. It is also recognized that under the Towns for Tomorrow Program, there was limited funding for any given year, and a desire to maximize the benefit on a regional basis.

Further recognizing the unique nature of regional districts, the 2011 Community Recreation Program allows for 3 applications per regional district, increasing the opportunities within any individual regional district for funding.

Finally, while the Towns for Tomorrow Program has met its initial mandate with respect to funding, and is now fully committed, the provincial government will consider regional district application criteria in future programs and/or extensions to existing programs.

B144 ANIMAL ABUSE

WHEREAS there have been many incidents of animal abuse in the news lately, and, the British Columbia Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (BC SPCA) receives no government funding to conduct animal cruelty investigations and lacks sufficient resources to enforce the provisions of the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act*, resulting in increased demands on local government to take action in response to animal welfare complaints;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the Province of British Columbia to demonstrate its commitment to the welfare of animals in the province by providing appropriate funding to allow the BC SPCA to effectively prevent and respond to incidents of animal abuse.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Agriculture

Public health and safety and the welfare of animals are important to the Government of British Columbia and as such the 2011 amendments to the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act* will ensure a greater level of protection for the animals of British Columbia.

The Ministry of Agriculture is not in a position to financially support the BC SPCA at this time.

The Ministry of Agriculture encourages the all local governments to work with the BC SPCA to address animal welfare issues locally.

B145 ANIMAL WELFARE IN BC COMMUNITIES

WHEREAS there is an immediate concern regarding abused, abandoned and neglected animals, as well as public health and safety, in rural British Columbia communities;

AND WHEREAS the British Columbia Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (BCSPCA) is responsible, under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, for taking custody of abandoned animals and taking any action necessary to relieve distressed or critically distressed animals;

AND WHEREAS the BCSPCA has the authority to establish and operate public shelters for stray and seized animals;

AND WHEREAS the BCSPCA has the authority under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act to appoint an officer, employee, or any other person who has been appointed as a special provincial constable under the Police Act as an authorized agent under the Act;

AND WHEREAS there is a lack of SPCA branches in rural BC communities resulting in public health and safety issues and a lack of animal welfare enforcement:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM lobby the Province for funding to support the BC Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (BCSPCA) for the purpose establishing additional public shelters or appointing authorized agents for all rural communities to ensure public health, safety and welfare of animals.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Agriculture

Public health and safety and the welfare of animals are important to the Government of British Columbia. In addition, the 2011 amendments to the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act* ensure even more protection for the animals of British Columbia.

The resources available to the British Columbia Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (BCSPCA) provide flexibility and tools needed to address public health, safety and welfare of animals. Careful application of the resources is needed to ensure that priority cases are addressed in all areas of the province.

The BCSPCA operates in many communities in British Columbia and has the authority, under their legislation, to appoint persons to carry out the mandate.

The Ministry of Agriculture is currently experiencing funding pressures from a number of different areas. As a result, the Ministry is not in a position to assist the BCSPCA with providing further financial assistance for a public shelter.

The Ministry of Agriculture encourages all local governments to work with the BCSPCA to find workable solutions within the current resource envelope.

B146 UBCM RESOLUTIONS SESSION PARTICIPATION

WHEREAS the Union of British Columbia Municipalities hosts an annual convention which includes the introduction and debate of items and issues of importance to local government in British Columbia;

AND WHEREAS the UBCM Convention provides an opportunity to local government elected officials to have consultation meetings with provincial government ministries and support organizations, which creates scheduling conflicts between attending UBCM resolution debate sessions and the provincial government meetings:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM ask the provincial government to discontinue scheduling ministry and support organization meetings during the scheduled UBCM resolutions sessions.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development

The Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development Services has been an active partner with UBCM in the process of coordinating government participation at the annual UBCM Convention. The Ministry recognizes the importance of the UBCM resolutions debate that takes place at the annual UBCM Convention and the desire to have maximum delegate participation. However, the Province receives a great number of meeting requests from delegates to meet with provincial government staff during the Convention and does its best to accommodate these meeting requests. There would be an average of 30 percent reduction in the number of meetings that could be accommodated at Convention if the provincial government discontinues scheduling ministry and support organization meetings during the scheduled UBCM resolutions sessions.

The Ministry respects the resolution process and will continue to work with UBCM to maximize its potential.

B149 TRANSPORTATION OF HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

WHEREAS the new Asia Pacific Gateway has, and will contribute to, increased freight transportation along the Highway 16 corridor, including hazardous materials;

AND WHEREAS the federal *Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act* regulates the transportation of hazardous materials including the emergency response support capabilities of shippers, carriers, and/or consignees:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the NCLGA and the UBCM conduct a review to determine whether the emergency response capabilities are appropriate for the quantities and class of hazardous materials now being transported along the new Asia Pacific Gateway corridor.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure recognizes that the safe transit of goods and commodities on Highway 16 and the adjacent rail corridor is a concern of local governments. To ensure the safe transit of dangerous goods, and provide improved spill response capability, the Ministry of Environment, as part of its Environmental Emergency legislative review process and as the lead provincial ministry for hazardous material spill response, has been reviewing measures that could be implemented to improve spill response capability and capacity in the province while ensuring that those sectors that present the risk bear the costs.

The Ministry of Environment is currently examining the concept of both an industry funding model to support prevention, preparedness and response activities of the Ministry's Environmental Emergency Program, as well as the creation of a regulated terrestrial spill cooperative by industry to ensure that geographic response plans are developed and the required capability and capacity to respond effectively to spills exists. Government will be review the options being prepared by ministry staff to determine how best to protect British Columbians from the increasing risk of hazardous material spills and ensure a true polluter pay system is in place.

B150 SENIORS' TESTING UNDER DRIVEABLE PROGRAM

WHEREAS under the DriveABLE program, the Superintendent of Motor Vehicles requires that at 80years of age, senior citizens may be required to be tested to confirm their fitness to drive;

AND WHEREAS due to the urban locations of DriveABLE testing facilities in British Columbia, seniors in rural areas are required to travel substantial distances in order to be tested, resulting in considerable physical duress and financial burden:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province of BC be requested to provide additional testing facilities or implement other options that would allow testing to be done in the community where the senior resides.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

DriveABLE is a specialized assessment tool used for only a small percentage of driver fitness assessments and so it is not feasible to always ensure testing is available in the community where the senior resides. DriveABLE assessments require the expertise of a trained healthcare provider (typically a kinesiologist or an occupational therapist) to facilitate each assessment.

The current driver medical fitness process is similar to many other medical assessments – the initial screening is done at the community physician level, but specialized assessments often need to be done at a regional level, where the specialist equipment and skills are located.

However, the Superintendent of Motor Vehicles is looking at opportunities to further expand the number of locations where DriveABLE assessments are available. We are also working with our existing DriveABLE service providers to look at options for providing mobile assessment services or using satellite locations.

A mobile unit has been added on a pilot basis to address the needs of drivers in the Sechelt area. We continue to work with service providers to provide increased access in other areas of the province.

B151 BEE IMPORTATION

WHEREAS local honey bee populations on Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands are in danger of contracting diseases and pests from mainland North America that significantly affect the health of honeybees, and which are not currently present on Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands;

AND WHEREAS the Province recently lifted a 22 year long quarantine that prohibited the importation of honey bees from mainland North America to Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM petition the Province to protect the health of island bee populations by restoring the former quarantine that has managed the importation of honey bees and prohibited the importation of used equipment and combs to Canada Food Inspection Agency standards from mainland North America to Vancouver Island, the Sunshine Coast and the Gulf Islands.

Response: Ministry of Agriculture

The Ministry of Agriculture established that there was no longer a qualitative difference in the honey bee disease profiles of the Vancouver Island Bee District and mainland bee districts. In the absence of scientific justification, the application of restrictive honey bee shipping conditions to Vancouver Island that exceeded those used in other bee districts, and between provinces for bee imports, was deemed "legally non-defensible" by the Ministry of the Attorney General.

In May 2010, the Ministry of Agriculture introduced a set of shipping conditions applicable to all Bee Districts which include colony inspection by ministry-appointed Apiary Inspectors prior to shipment, permit issuance and mandatory registration of apiaries. Colony inspections meet or exceed standards accepted by other provinces.

The Ministry of Agriculture believes that the new shipping conditions allow beekeepers to realize economic opportunity while maintaining an effective program to prevent the introduction of new bee diseases in all parts of the province and mitigate their impact.

B152 TRADING WATER RIGHTS

WHEREAS the information provided by the Policy Proposal on British Columbia's new Water Sustainability Act concerning the trading of water rights is very general in nature;

AND WHEREAS it is not substantiated how water rights trading might serve to improve water efficiencies;

AND WHEREAS water availability may fluctuate from year to year and from basin to basin:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM express its strong reservations to the provincial government that the use of trading water rights as an economic instrument will have the desired benefits and may indeed have serious unanticipated consequences to water management and agriculture in the province.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment

The Policy Proposal on British Columbia's new *Water Sustainability Act* generated a high level of public concern that tradable permits – sometimes referred to as "water markets" – will mean privatization and deregulation of BC's water.

The provincial government has no intention of privatizing BC's water resources. Under the current *Water Act*, water is vested in the Crown on behalf of the public and this will not change in the proposed *Water Sustainability Act*.

Tradable permits are one of a number of economic instruments that can improve water use efficiency. They would enable water licensees to trade water rights locally on a short-term or seasonal basis to address water scarcity.

Further research and public review is needed before such a policy tool would be considered in BC.

B154 FUNDING FOR REGIONAL AREA GEOLOGISTS

WHEREAS local governments are aware of the critical importance of the mining industry to strengthen and diversify the economy of British Columbia;

AND WHEREAS the province of BC holds valuable geological resources:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request that the Province of BC continue to ensure funding for all regional area geologists.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Energy and Mines

Government recognizes the important role of the regional geologists in attracting mineral exploration and mine development investment that creates jobs throughout the province and serving your communities.

New staff have been hired in the north as of November 2011. Government will also be using contract staff to ensure the province has collected information about mineral exploration, mine development and mining activity for the north for 2011.

B155 HST EXEMPTION

WHEREAS the provincial government has adopted the ActNow BC program and policies to promote healthier lifestyles for all residents of British Columbia;

AND WHEREAS the provincial government has incorporated healthy living information on its website under the ActNow BC program for families, schools, seniors, community and work environments stating that every move is a good move;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM lobby the provincial government for an exemption from the Harmonized Sales Tax for admissions to health and wellness facilities such as but not limited to health clubs, pools, gyms and ice arenas, as well as on the purchase of physical fitness equipment pursuant to the provincial government's promotion for healthy living styles.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Finance

British Columbians have made their decision in the HST referendum, and government has committed to make the transition back to the PST plus GST tax system as responsibly and quickly as possible.

Permanent PST exemptions will return with the re-implemented PST.

In addition to over $4 million for ActNow BC, the government has provided a variety of funding to support healthy lifestyles:

- $68.7 million for Healthy Families BC a new strategy aimed at helping families make healthy choices including $24 million for the Prescription for Health Program which gives doctors tools to work with patients to develop a health promotion and illness prevention plan.

- $50.9 million since 2005 for school and community based initiatives such as:
    - Action Schools BC: a program with over 1,400 registered schools which helps schools create action plans to promote healthy living for students K to 12;
    - School fruit and veggie program which coordinates the delivery of healthy BC produce to participating schools;
    - LEAP: a set of resources designed to help families and caregivers of pre-school aged children promote healthy child development through physical movement, healthy eating and early literacy;

  - BC Healthy Communities an initiative to directly support local communities to identify and develop comprehensive health promotion policy, resources and programs; and Active Communities a program which supported registered communities to develop and promote local physical activity programs ($1.9 million up to the end of fiscal 2008/09); and
  - Grant to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities for the Community Health Promotion Fund to create community programs aligned to the ActNow BC Program ($5M in 2005);

- $25.5 million between 2005-2010 for the BC Healthy Living Alliance which works to advance and support health-promoting policies, environments, programs and services.

B157 AGE RESTRICTIONS ON INDOOR TANNING

WHEREAS using indoor tanning devices is particularly damaging for youth and increases their risk of melanoma (the deadliest form of skin cancer);

AND WHEREAS the Medical Health Officers' Council of BC calls upon the Province of British Columbia to use its regulatory powers to restrict use of indoor tanning beds by persons under the age of 18:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM lobby the provincial government to introduce legislation to ban indoor tanning for youth under the age of 18.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

On March 20, 2012, the Province announced that it will ban commercial tanning bed use by young people under the age of 18, unless they have a medical prescription. The proposed regulation under the Public Health Act is anticipated to take effect in the fall of 2012.

The announcement follows the release of a report by the Indoor Tanning Working Group in March 2012, which recommended the ban. The Working Group was established at the request of the Minister of Health in fall 2011. This followed the introduction of a bylaw by the Capital Regional District in Victoria banning minors under the age of 18 from using indoor tanning beds — as well as subsequent requests for a province-wide ban by a number of medical organizations and the UBCM.

The Working Group included representation from the Joint Canadian Tanning Association; BC Cancer Agency; Canadian Cancer Society; Canadian Dermatology Association; BC Centre for Disease Control; UBCM; Office of the Provincial Health Officer; and Ministry of Health.

B156 CASINO DEVELOPMENT

WHEREAS:

- the proposed expansion of Edgewater Casino on the North East Shore of False Creek in Downtown Vancouver would be the largest casino in British Columbia;
- recent news has revealed a concerning link between casinos and organized crime and money laundering;
- citizens across BC are concerned about increasing organized crime activity and the accompanying increases in enforcement costs;
- recent reports also show record subsidies paid to casinos while non-profits, charities, and arts organizations are being funded at levels lower than during the 1990s;
- the fact the Gaming Policy Enforcement Branch and the British Columbia Lottery Corporation are being directed by the same ministry represents a serious potential conflict in gaming priorities and raises serious concerns about how gaming will be regulated and promoted in BC; and
- public confidence in the lottery public system needs to be restored:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government:

A. separate the Gaming Policy Enforcement Branch and the British Columbia Lottery Corporation into different ministries;
B. conduct a review of public gaming in the province of British Columbia in order to restore public confidence in the integrity of the gaming system;
C. in response to a request from the BC Association of Charitable Gaming, instruct the Auditor General to investigate and review the BC government's obligations to charities for gaming revenues; and
D. affirm both the inherent and contractual rights and interests of charities and non-profits to gaming proceeds.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

The governance model for gaming in British Columbia ensures decisions are made in an open and transparent manner, and are free from influence. The roles and responsibilities of the Gaming Policy and Enforcement Branch, the BC Lottery Corporation, and the Minister Responsible for Gaming Policy are clearly set out in the *Gaming Control Act* and regulations. Reporting to the same minister allows for clear communication when resolving issues and consistency in setting strategic directions for the industry.

As of March 14, 2011, the responsibility for administration of community gaming grants was moved from the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General to the Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development.

In response to the concerns raised by changes to gaming criteria and funding, Mr. Skip Triplett was appointed to lead a review into Community Gaming Grants. The Review visited 14 communities in person, and conducted 5 video and teleconferences during August and September to gather input from individuals and non-profit organizations through a series of Community Forums.

Mr. Triplett's final report with options was submitted to the Minister of Community, Sport and Cultural Development on October 31, 2011 for consideration and review. The report and government's response to it will be released, in full, early in the New Year.

B160 FOOD SAFETY AT COMMUNITY EVENTS

WHEREAS the Village of Alert Bay has a long tradition of tournaments and festivals which have traditionally included street vendors selling locally prepared food;

AND WHEREAS there has never been a case of food borne illness associated with the consumption of the food from these street vendors;

AND WHEREAS the Vancouver Island Health Authority is taking enforcement action against street vendors and sellers and providers of homemade food at community events:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request that all health authorities develop reasonable policies that will allow the sale and provision of foods prepared in non-commercial kitchens and which are not cost prohibitive or otherwise prohibitively onerous to the average citizen.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

In April 2011, a guideline was developed that provides clear direction on the preparation of lower risk foods in the home, and the conditions for sale of lower risk food at temporary food markets. The Guideline for the Sale of Foods at Temporary Food Markets was prepared by the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) in collaboration with the ministries of Health and Agriculture, the five regional health authorities, and the BC Association of Farmers Markets.

These guidelines aim to protect the public by ensuring that food prepared at home which is offered for sale at temporary food markets is limited to lower risk foods. Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) retain discretion to remove any food sold at a temporary food market considered to be a health hazard as defined in Section 1 of the *Public Health Act*, or is contaminated as per Section 3 of the *Food Safety Act*.

An Environmental Health Risk Management & Graduated Enforcement Policy Framework is in place to guide EHOs.

This graduated enforcement framework (sometimes referred to as Progressive Enforcement) provides a suite of progressively escalating enforcement actions that may be used to eliminate, reduce or mitigate risks and/or to ensure compliance with legislative and policy provisions that are in place to protect the health and safety of the public. Such actions begin with education about food safety and regulatory requirements and progress through warnings, orders to stop illegal activities, ticketing, and in extreme circumstances, prosecution under food safety legislation.

It is extremely difficult for a consumer to determine if food products are contaminated with dangerous pathogens; indeed, even food products with a normal appearance can contain pathogenic bacteria with the potential to cause human illness. Consuming contaminated food may result in mild illness, long-lasting serious disease, or even death, particularly among vulnerable populations including young children, immune-compromised individuals, seniors, and pregnant women.

Often food borne illness goes unreported or is under-reported, as symptoms can take 1 to 18 hours, or even up to 3 days, from the time of consumption to manifest. Ensuring that food products sold to the public are safe for human consumption is an important goal for the Province.

B164 CANADA FIRST SHIPPING & TRANSPORTATION POLICY

WHEREAS the State of Alaska is seeking access to the North American electrical grid through a connection to the Northwest Transmission line near Bob Quinn Lake, BC with an accompanying service road to the Alaska Border to service such a connection;

AND WHEREAS such a service road would enable access to Wrangell, Alaska leading to the potential development of new bulk cargo shipping facilities in Wrangell at the expense of developing and established port communities in British Columbia, denying these BC communities the economic and social benefits of increased economic activity in the northwest corridor;

AND WHEREAS the many mining and similar projects in Northwestern BC benefit from the taxation and investment policies of British Columbia and Canada:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM support a "Canada First" policy for the shipping of bulk cargo and similar goods through Canadian ports rather than through Alaska and that the Province of British Columbia be encouraged to adopt and implement such a policy;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that any connection to the Northwest Transmission line from the State of Alaska does not include the development of a service road or a new transportation corridor.

REPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

The resolution raises concerns that bulk exports are being diverted from Canadian ports to Wrangell, Alaska. These concerns are not based on any current evidence that such diversions are or could be occurring. Imposing any kind of trade and transportation barriers such as those discussed would be a violation of Canada's NAFTA obligations

The US Federal Maritime Commission (FMC) is currently studying claims in the United States that the US Harbour Maintenance Tax is causing container traffic to be diverted from US ports to Canadian and Mexican ports. In submissions made to the FMC by the province, Canada and the four main Canadian ports (Vancouver, Prince Rupert, Montreal and Halifax) the importance of the benefits of seamless trade and transportation between Canada and the US to both our economies was strongly emphasized

The majority of submissions to the FMC from US parties echoed the importance of seamless trade and transportation between our countries. If Canada and/or BC were to publicly propose a "Canada First" transportation policy it would likely be met by US Senators calling for prohibitions on US destined containers entering through Canadian ports, particularly Vancouver and Prince Rupert – this container traffic is significant business for these two ports

Additionally, the recently announced Harper/Obama border initiative ("Beyond the Border: a shared vision for perimeter security and economic competitiveness") is seeking to implement actions that will speed up trade and travel between Canada and the US – a "Canada First" policy would be counter to this agreement as both countries rely on access to each other's port facilities – e.g. 25% of all coal exported through BC ports is of US origin.

B174 BC HYDRO WIRELESS SMART METERS

WHEREAS significant and serious health, privacy and other concerns have been identified regarding the installation of wireless smart meters in British Columbia;
AND WHEREAS BC Hydro is proceeding with its program to install wireless smart meters in British Columbia although it recognizes there is active discussion and ongoing research into the possible health and environmental effects related to radio frequency signals and it is aware the World Health Organization has called for further investigation on this matter in its press release issued on May 31, 2011:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that a moratorium be placed on the mandatory installation of wireless smart meters until the major issues and problems identified regarding wireless smart meters are independently assessed and acceptable alternatives can be made available at no added cost to the consumer.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Energy and Mines

The Province is not prepared to place a moratorium on the mandatory installation of wireless smart meters. The *Clean Energy Act* established a legal requirement for BC Hydro to install smart meters for all of its customers by the end of 2012. The Province is satisfied that BC Hydro's smart meter program will deliver significant benefits to ratepayers by making the power grid more efficient and reliable.

The BC Centre for Disease Control has confirmed that BC Hydro's smart meters emit radio waves at a power density that is significantly below the legal limits governing exposure to radio frequency. Given the current scientific evidence, the consensus of public health practitioners is that at current exposure levels smart meters and other radio-frequency emitting devices, such as baby monitors and fm radio, do not constitute a threat to the health of the public.

BC Hydro is working closely with the office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner for British Columbia to ensure that BC Hydro meets legislated privacy standards and that appropriate privacy and security measures are built into the entire smart grid system.

B175 PROVINCIAL INCOME ASSISTANCE RATES

WHEREAS the October 2010 CMHC Rental Market Report for Kelowna indicates average rents far exceed the shelter allowance portion of BC Assistance, and the cost of living, particularly shelter, in this province has continually increased without corresponding adjustments to the levels of assistance;

AND WHEREAS thousands of low-income households in our city are paying far in excess of 30%, the majority in excess of 50%, of their gross income before tax on shelter including adults with disabilities who may have greater expenses than seniors in order to address the needs of their disability, including access to special needs housing:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial Ministry of Social Development be asked to increase current assistance rates and implement a program to adjust those rates annually based on the BC Average Annual Consumer Price Index;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the provincial Ministry of Social Development also be asked to increase assistance for adults with disabilities to the same level of assistance available to seniors.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Social Development

Like many other provinces, B.C. is not in a financial position to consider increases to income assistance and disability assistance. An increase in not part of the government's current fiscal plan.

This government believes that work is better than welfare and our rates for clients who are expected to work support people to transition to work. For employable individuals, income assistance is meant to be a temporary support and has never been intended to permanently replace full-time work.

B.C. recognizes that a variety of approaches are needed such as tax measures, subsidized housing options, child care subsidies, medical services, disability supports and employment programs aimed at reducing poverty and breaking the cycle of homelessness. That's why we have committed to working closely with the UBCM's Healthy Communities Committee to develop local poverty reduction strategies that would address the real challenges families are facing in metro, urban, rural and remote settings.

Seven communities will be selected, comprising a mix of rural, urban, remote and metro, to pilot strategies that target the unique needs of families living in poverty. Successes from pilot communities will provide insight into strategic approaches for other B.C. communities.

Government will work in partnership with municipal governments, local community organizations, service providers and business representatives to develop strategic, measurable plans focused on reducing poverty, mitigating its effects and supporting services for low income families.

We recognize support in needed for people with disabilities to participate in employment or other community activities. The ministry realizes people with disabilities have additional barriers to overcome and may require additional financial supports. This is why we provide B.C.'s highest rate of assistance to persons with disabilities ($906 a month) – and the fourth highest rate compared to other provinces. In addition, they are offered a $500 earnings exemption to encourage them to work as they are able. Clients receive significant additional income from federal and provincial tax and child benefit programs. This ranges from $50 per month for a single employable client to well over $1,000 per month for a client with two or more children.

All clients are also eligible for a wide range of health and other supplementary benefits to meet a variety of unexpected or additional needs. Persons with disabilities with significant disability and health expenses can receive more disposable income after these needs are met than on OAS/GIS.

SR2 EMERGENCY RESOLUTION ON RCMP CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS

WHEREAS the current state of the RCMP contract negotiations has been the subject of much discussion at the 2011 UBCM Convention, with every BC local government as well as the other provinces and territories having a significant stake in these negotiations;

AND WHEREAS it is the desire of those BC local governments, presently contracting RCMP services, to retain the RCMP as their police of choice:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request that the Government of Canada, in the spirit of partnership and collaboration, return to the table with the Government of British Columbia and the remaining provinces and territories to negotiate the settlement of a new RCMP contract that addresses the outstanding issues of a new partnership, cost containment and accountability.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

For four years the provincial government worked hard to negotiate a new contract for RCMP services that meets the needs of British Columbia communities into the future.

The negotiations were based on three common goals:
Changing the relationship from client-based to true partnership;
Expanding operational and financial accountability;
Cost-containment and cost control.

On November 30, 2011, the Province confirmed it has reached an Agreement-in-Principle with Public Safety Canada for RCMP services in British Columbia. The tentative agreement contains important new management provisions and includes a two-year opt-out clause and a five-year review. The Province is in the midst of consulting local governments on the terms of the new agreement after which it will proceed to Cabinet for consideration.

The current agreement expires on March 31, 2012.

OF1 HEALTH CARE COSTS RECOVERY ACT

WHEREAS the Health Care Costs Recovery Act allows the Ministry of Health to recover all health costs for personal injuries stemming from the negligence of wrongdoing of a third party;

AND WHEREAS the legislation is intended to ensure that those who are negligent, rather than the taxpayer, are held liable for the past and potential future health care costs for impacted individuals;

AND WHEREAS the provincial government has started pursuing municipalities and municipal police departments for health care costs related to incidents occurring within their jurisdiction;

AND WHEREAS health care costs for personal injury and the associated legal costs can be significant and would place an unacceptable burden on municipal tax payers:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province be requested to withdraw all current claims under the Health Care Costs Recovery Act against municipal governments and provide a commitment to review their practice of pursuing claims against local governments except in cases of gross negligence.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

The *Health Care Costs Recovery Act* allows government to recover health care costs from negligent third parties. The legislation strengthens government's ability to effectively hold those responsible for causing injuries accountable and ensure that those who commit the negligent act, not the taxpayers, pay for the resulting health care costs. Municipalities, if negligent, are no different than any other group or individual and should therefore be treated the same.

As indicated, the legislation is intended to ensure that those who are negligent, rather than the taxpayer, are held liable for health care costs. Therefore, it would be unfair to hold all taxpayers responsible for paying health care costs for a specific municipality that has been negligent; those costs should be borne only by that municipality and the taxpayers within.

The resolution also indicates that legal costs can be significant. However, the medical costs are normally a very small percentage of the overall claim filed by an injured party. Further, it is likely that the municipality will have had a law suit filed against them for the negligent act and will require legal resources to deal with that suit regardless of whether there is a claim for health care costs. The incremental legal costs for the addition of the health care costs will be minimal.

The Ministry of Health is not considering changes to the *Act* or policy on how the *Act* is applied at this time. Municipalities will be expected to settle health care claims with the Ministry, as would any other group of individual.